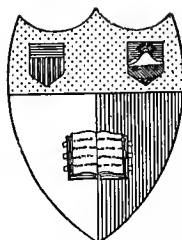




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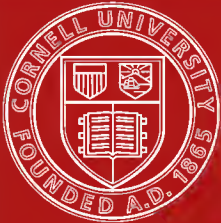


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# MUCH ADOE ABOUT NOTHING

by  
*William Shakespeare*

EDITED BY

W. G. BOSWELL-STONE

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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# Much adoe about Nothing.

## INTRODUCTION.

### DATE

THE earliest published edition of this play was the Quarto of 1600. It had been entered in the Stationers' Register, together with *As You Like It*, *Henry the Fifth*, and *Every Man in His Humour*, under the date of August 4, the year not being given. The fact that the previous entry is dated May 27, 1600, is sufficiently strong evidence for referring it to the same year, the presumption being that the clerk did not think it worth while to repeat the year. In the famous list of Shakespeare's plays enumerated by Meres in his *Palladis Tamia*, published in 1598, *Much Ado about Nothing* is not mentioned, and thus we are able to fix the play between narrow limits. In the first scene of the play the speech of Beatrice about 'musty victual' has been thought to be a reference to Essex's campaign in Ireland of 1599, in which the catering for the soldiers was not all that could be desired; while in the same scene the stress that is laid on the victory being achieved with the loss of 'but few of any sort, and none of name,' is with more probability thought to allude to an early success in the same campaign.

Such an allusion would be very popular, for the expedition of Essex aroused high interest and enthusiasm, and Shakespeare alludes to it specifically in *Henry V*. According to this, 1599 would be the date of the play, which would be in harmony with the external evidence previously quoted, while it is supported by the conclusions that may be drawn from metre, style, subject and treatment. Difficult as it is to separate Shakespeare's work into 'periods,' and misleading as are the results that are obtained from the promiscuous and over-elaborate use of this method, it must be conceded that there are at least strong grounds for believing that *As You Like It* and the present play were composed at periods of Shakespeare's career which were not divided from each other by any great lapse of time. Both plays are dis-

### *Much ado about Nothing.*

tinguished by a joyousness and serenity, a somewhat hasty brushing aside of obstacles that would seem to be impediments to mar the eventual prosperity of the characters; in both there is the same preponderance of prose and humour, and the combination of a romantic background with a plot of a primarily humorous interest. The diction of both plays also has points of resemblance: the thoughts are never crowded as in the later plays, nor are they laboriously and even affectedly spun out as in many of the earlier ones, while the trite reflections and eager snatching at opportunities for verbal quips have almost entirely disappeared from the verse portions, and in this latter respect especially the play may be contrasted with the earlier *Merchant of Venice*. 1599 may therefore be set down with every confidence as being the date of composition of this play, and the only serious attempt to refute this has been lodged on a clever but unconvincing effort to identify *Love's Labour's Won*, mentioned by Meres, with *Much Ado*.

#### SOURCE

Two stories have been mentioned as probable sources for this play. The first is that of Ariodante and Geneva, told in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which had been rendered into English by Sir John Harington, and beautifully adapted by Spenser in his *Faery Queene*. Pope confidently asserted that this (the Harington version of Ariosto) was the original for the plot of *Much Ado*, but a cursory examination almost entirely dispels the probability of his suggestion. The only similarity consists in the fact that Geneva was falsely accused of inconstancy, and this charge was supported much in the same manner as that against Hero. On the other hand, the events leading up to this belying of a fair lady's fame and the development after the central event are entirely and irreconcilably different. The second suggested source is a story in the novels of Matteo Bandello dealing with the crossing of the path of true love between a worthy but simple knight, Signor Timbreo di Cardona, and the virtuous lady, Fenicia. Here the resemblance is certainly more feasible. We have the false accusation, which is supported in an almost identical manner in novel and play,

## Introduction.

followed by the strategic death of the lady, the illumination of the hero (which in the novel is brought about by the repentance of the villain); while the final solution is brought about by the repentant Don Timbreo promising to marry any lady that the aggrieved father of Fenicia may choose, and so finding himself in the arms of his beloved Fenicia. This, then, is decidedly more promising; and a minor point of resemblance lies in the fact that two of the names in the novel are almost identical with those of the play, namely, that of the king, Don Pedro, and the father, Lionato; while the scene is laid in Messina. There are, however, points of strong contrast as well as of similitude. In the novel Don Pedro takes no part in the action whatever; there are no characters corresponding to Benedick and Beatrice; the deception is brought about by a jealous lover of the virtuous lady, and is cleared up by his repentance. Don Timbreo renounces the lady in less dramatic and, it must be added, more knightly fashion than Claudio by means of a messenger; Dogberry and Verges are entirely absent. These are a few of the principal differences, and if, as seems probable, Shakespeare found the germ of the story in Bandello, it must be admitted that he has altogether reconstructed the story. It must be added that there is no *known* English translation that was available; but a French version by Belleforêt had been published in 1582. This is fortunately not the place to enter into the perplexing and somewhat unprofitable controversy of Shakespeare's knowledge or ignorance of all languages save his own. Finally, there is the suggestion that *Much Ado* was founded on an old lost play derived from Bandello which Shakespeare remoulded. This has a certain probability to support it; but nothing more definite can be stated beyond that Bandello was probably either the primary or the ultimate source.

## THE TEXT

The text of this play offers few difficulties; the one here reprinted is that of the first and only Quarto, which has none of the imperfections which are found in many of the pirated editions of popular plays. The discrepancies between this Quarto and the first Folio are comparatively few, and even these are of no

## *Much adoe about Nothing.*

great importance. There are no passages in the Folio that are not found in the Quarto; on the other hand, the Folio omits certain short passages that are printed in the Quarto. The remaining differences consist chiefly in matters of orthography, and trivial details in the stage-directions. The Quarto, if not printed direct from Shakespeare's manuscript, was evidently founded on an authenticated copy; while the Folio had probably a prompt-copy as its original, and one in which the few alterations and omissions which repeated performances of the play had shown to be desirable were duly made. For an exhaustive consideration of the relation of the two texts, the reader is referred to Mr. P. A. Daniel's excellent introduction to the Quarto Facsimile Edition of *Much Ado about Nothing*.

The most distinguished feature of the play is the extreme skill of characterization in Beatrice and Benedick. Their verbal contests in the early part of the play are irresistibly amusing, though it is the exquisite language with which their jests are clothed, rather than the intrinsic value of the ideas themselves, that render them immortal, while in the latter part, the way in which both of them show themselves ready to take prompt and generous action when the crisis arrives is finely conceived and faultlessly executed.

Claudio has been perhaps too much condemned as a blot on the canvas; he is represented as a fearless warrior with but little experience of the world, easily influenced, and therefore prone to suspicion. His groundless suspicion of Don Pedro in the second act is a typically Shakespearian touch, and admirably paves the way for what is to come.

A conspicuous feature of this play is the harmony of the two plots. A plot of almost tragic intensity linked with one of humorous interest was of course a common characteristic of Elizabethan drama. It is only necessary to compare *Much Ado* with one of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedies—for instance, *The Captain*—to appreciate this portion of the dramatist's art.

### THE DIVISION OF ACTS

In this respect Mr. Spedding's suggested rearrangement has been followed. His article will be found in the *Transactions* of

### *Introduction.*

the New Shakspeare Society, and the part relative to this play is reprinted in Furness's Variorum Edition. Briefly, his argument is as follows: No division of acts is found in the Quarto Edition of this play; we therefore have to rely on the Folio Edition of 1623, and as this was published many years after the production of the play, we need not assume the division given as necessarily incontrovertible. In the ordinary arrangement there is evidently a certain interval between Scenes 1 and 2 of the first act, as Claudio and Don Pedro have a conversation in a thick-pleached alley which is overheard, and the repetition of which is the chief business of Scenes 2 and 3. On the other hand, the break between Acts III and IV seems purposeless. There is a very short interval, for Dogberry has not time to examine his prisoners, and nothing whatever has happened between the acts. By closing the first act at the end of Act I, scene 1, the second act at the end of Act II, scene 2, and the third act at the end of Act III, scene 3, these inconsistencies are avoided and the play gains in uniformity. The first act is now entirely occupied with exposition; in the second act the various deceptions are planned; in the third they are carried out, while in the fourth the various complications are brought to exactly the right point for the unravelling which is the business of the fifth act to take place.





The Scene, Messina in Sicilie.

THE PERSONS WHO ACT

SET DOWN IN THE ORDER OF THEIR ONCOMING

(With References to their first Speeches in each Scene).

- 'LEONATO, *Gouverneur of Messina*,' I.i.1, p. 1; II.i.1, p. 9; II.iii.1, p. 12; III.i.86, p. 25; III.iii.15, p. 34; IV.ii.1, p. 44; IV.iii.1, p. 46; V.i.3, p. 58; V.iv.2, p. 71.
- 'INNOGEN, *his Wife*' (*says nothing*), I.i. p. 1; II.iii. p. 12.
- A Messenger*, I.i.3, p. 1; IV.ii.49, p. 45; V.iv.121, p. 75.
- 'BEATRICE, *his Niece*,' I.i.26, p. 2; II.iii.3, p. 12; III.i.219, p. 29; III.ii. (23, p. 30), 107, p. 33; IV.i.36, p. 42; IV.iii.107, p. 49; V.ii.40, p. 68; V.iv.73, p. 73.
- 'HERO, *his Daughter*,' I.i.31, p. 2; II.iii.5, p. 12; III.ii.1, p. 30; IV.i.1, p. 41; IV.iii.8, p. 46; V.iv.60, p. 73.
- DON PEDRO, *Princes of Messina*, I.i.80, p. 3; II.iii.74, p. 14; III.i.33, p. 24; III.iii.1, p. 33; IV.iii.26, p. 47; V.i.46, p. 59; V.iii.24, p. 70; V.iv.34, p. 72.
- '*Signior* BENEDICK *of Padua*,' I.i.90, p. 3; II.iii.111, p. 15; III.i.1, p. 23; III.iii.14, p. 34; IV.iii.18, p. 46; V.i.111, p. 61; V.ii.1, p. 67; V.iv.8, p. 71.
- SIR (or DON) IOHN the Bastard, *base-born Brother of DON PEDRO*, I.i.133, p. 5; II.ii.3, p. 10; II.iii.138, p. 16; II.iv.1, p. 21; III.iii.71, p. 35; IV.iii.64, p. 42.
- CLAUDIO, '*a young Florentine*' Lord, *in love with HERO*, I.i.138, p. 5; II.iii.143, p. 16; III.i.34, p. 24; III.iii.3, p. 33; IV.iii.5, p. 46; V.i.46, p. 59; V.iii.1, p. 70; V.iv.38, p. 72.
- ANTONIO, '*an old man, Brother to LEONATO*,' II.i.3, p. 9; II.iii.2, p. 12; V.i.1, p. 58; V.iv.7, p. 71.
- Kinmen of LEONATO*, II.i. p. 9 (*says nothing*).
- CONRADE, a '*Gentleman*,' a '*Companion of IOHN the Bastard*,' II.ii.1, p. 10; III.iv.91, p. 39; IV.iv.14, p. 55; V.i. p. 63 (*says nothing*).
- BORACHIO, *another Companion of IOHN the Bastard*, II.ii.35, p. 11; II.iii.141, p. 16; II.iv.3, p. 21; (*cupshotten*, III.iv.88, p. 39); IV.iv.11, p. 55; V.i.215, p. 64.
- BALTHASAR, a *Singer* (*formerly playd by IACKE WILSON, of the Burbages' Company*), II.iii.87, p. 14; III.i.40, p. 24.
- A Drum*, to make '*Musicke*' for a Dance, II.iii. p. 14.
- MARGARET, one of HEROES '*two Gentlewomen*,' II.iii.88, p. 14; III.ii.14, p. 30; IV.i.6, p. 41; V.ii.3, p. 67; V.iv. p. 71 (*says nothing*).

## The Persons who act.

**URSULA** (or **URSLEY**, p. 30), another of **HEROES** 'two Gentlewomen,' II.iii.98, p. 15; III.ii.26, p. 30; IV.i.3, p. 4x; V.ii.84, p. 69; V.iv. p. 7x (says nothing).

Boy to 'Signior **BENEDICKE**', III.i.2, p. 23.

Musicks for **BALTHASERS** Song, III.i.53, p. 25; for a hymne on **HERO**, V.iii.72, p. 70.

**DOGBERY** the Constable (formerly playd by **WILL KEMP** (p. 55), the first Comedy-man of the Burbages' company), III.iv.1, p. 37; IV.ii.2, p. 44; in a Gown,<sup>1</sup> IV.iv.1, p. 55; V.i.195, p. 63.

His 'compartner' & 'neighbour' **VERGES**, 'the Headborough' or second Constable (formerly playd by **RICHARD COWLEY** of the Burbages' Company (p. 55), III.iv.2, p. 37; IV.ii.7, p. 44; in a Gown, IV.iv.2, p. 55; V.i.240, p. 65.

Watchman 1, III.iv.10, p. 37; IV.iv.36, p. 56; V.i. p. 63 (says nothing).

Watchman 2, **GEORGE SEACOLE**, **DOGBERY'S** 'neighbor,' Constable of the Watch, III.iv.15, p. 37; IV.iv.45, p. 56; V.i. p. 63 (says nothing).

**FRIER FRANCIS**, IV.iii.4, p. 46; V.iv.1, p. 7x.

The Towne Clarke or Sexton, in a Gown, IV.iv.3, p. 55; V.i. p. 65 (says nothing).

'Three or Fours' Lords or Attendants 'with Tapers,' V.iii. p. 70, of whom one Lord speaks 4 Words, V.iii.2, p. 70.

'Two or Three other' Lords who say nothing, V.iv. p. 72.

The Stage-time of the Play is four Days; the date fixed for Hero's wedding—'a iust seuennight' from day 1—having been either forgotten or changed (See Mr. Daniel's Time-Analysis of *Much Ado*, in *New Sh. Soc.'s Trans.*, 1877-79, p. 144). Day 1, I.—II.ii. Day 2, II.iii.—III.iii. Day 3, III.iv.—V.iii. to L 24 Day 4, V.iii.24—V.iv.

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<sup>1</sup> He is here calld *Keeper* and **ANDREW**: see p. 55.

### NOTICE

In the Text, black type (*Clarendon* or *Sans-serif*) is used for all emendations and insertions.

When a *Quarto* reading is corrected by the First Folio or another Quarto, a mark (\*, †, ‡, §) is set to such reading.

In the Notes 'Q' means the First Quarto, 1600, from which the Play is edited. 'F' means the First Folio of 1623. F<sub>2</sub>, the Second Folio of 1632 (whose emendations are not treated as Shakspeare's).

¶ In the Text, means that the speaker turns and speaks to a fresh person.

Words having now a different stress from the Elizabethan, are generally accented, for the reader's convenience, as 'exile,' &c. When -ed final is pronounat as a separate syllable, the e is printed ê.

[Ornament]

# Much adoe about Nothing.

*As it hath been sundrie times publikely*  
acted by the right honourable, the Lord  
Chamberlaine his seruants.

*Written by William Shakespeare.*



LONDON

Printed by V. S. for Andrew Wife, and  
William Aspley.

1600.

[From the copy of the Quarto at the British Museum.]

# Much adoe about *Nothing*

*Actus Primus. Scena Prima.\**

Before LEONATOES house in Messina.

Enter LEONATO, Governour of Messina, INNOGEN his wife,  
HERO his daughter, and BEATRICE his Neece, with a  
Meffenger.

*Leonato.*

I Learne in this letter, that don *Peter* of Arragon<sup>1</sup> comes  
this night to *Messina*.

*Meff.* He is very neare by this; he was not three  
leagues off when I left him. 4

*Leona.* How many Gentlemen haue you loft in this  
action?

*Meff.* But few of any sort, and none of name. 7

*Leona.* A victory is twice it selfe, when the atchiuer brings  
home ful numbers. I find here, that don *Peter* hath bestowed  
much honour on a yong *Florentine* called *Claudio*. 10

*Meff.* Much deseru'd on his part, and equally remembred  
by don *Pedro*: he hath borne himselfe beyond the promise of  
his age, doing, in the figure of a Lamb, the feats of a Lion:  
he hath indeed better betted expectation then you must  
expect of me to tell you how. 15

*Leo.* He hath an vnckle here in *Messina* will be very much  
glad of it.

*Meff.* I haue already deliuered him letters, and there

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\* *Actus Primus. Scena Prima*] names of Persons and Places are  
F. not in Italics. We, however, put  
1 In the Quarto we print from, the them in italics as usual.

### *Much ado about Nothing.*

appeares much ioy in him ; euen so much, that ioy could not  
shew it selfe modest enough, without a badge of bitterneffe.

*Leo.* Did he breake out into teares? 21

*Meff.* In great measure.

*Leo.* A kind ouerflow of kindnesse! there are no faces  
truer then those that are so washt. How much better is it to  
weepe at ioy, then to ioy at weeping! 25

*Beatr.* I pray you, is Signior *Mountanto* returnd from the  
warres, or no?

*Meffen.* I know none of that name, Ladie : there was none  
such in the army of any fort. 29

*Leonato.* What is he that you aske for, Neece?

*Hero.* My cosen meanes Signior *Benedicke* of *Padua*.

*Meff.* O, hee's returnd, and as pleasant as euer he was! 32

*Bea.* He set vp his bills here in *Messina*, and challengde  
*Cupid* at the Flight ; and my vnclcs foole, reading the challenge,  
subscribde for *Cupid*, and challengde him at the Burbolt<sup>1</sup> : I  
pray you, how many hath he kild and eaten in these warres?  
But how many hath he kild? for indeede I promised to eate  
all of his killing. 38

*Leo.* Faith, Neece, you taxe Signior *Benedicke* too much!  
but heele be meet with you, I doubt it not.

*Meff.* He hath done good seruice, Lady, in these warres. 41

*Beat.* You had musty vittaille, and he hath holpe to eate  
it : he is a very valiaunt Trencher man ; he hath an excellent  
stomacke!

*Meff.* And a good fouldier too, Lady! 45

*Beat.* 'And a good fouldiour to a Lady'! But what is he to  
a Lord?

*Meff.* A Lord to a Lord, a Man to a Man, stufft with al  
honorable vertues! 49

*Beat.* It is so indeed! he is no lesse then a stufft man : but  
for the stuffing! wel! we are al mortall!

*Leo.* You must not, sir, mistake my Neece : there is a kind  
of mery warre betwixt Signior *Benedicke* and her : they  
neuer meet but there's a skirmish of wit betweene them. 54

*Beat.* Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflikt,  
4 of his fiew wits went halting off ; and now is the whole man

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<sup>1</sup> *Burbolt* = Birdbolt.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

gouvernd with one; so that if he haue wit enough to keep himself warm, let him beare it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath euery month a new sworne brother! 61

*Mess.* Ift possible?

*Beat.* Very easily 'possible': he weares his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it euer changes with the next blocke.

*Mess.* I see, Lady, the gentleman is not in your bookes. 65

*Beat.* No! and he were, I would burne my study! But I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no yong squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the diuell?

*Mess.* He is most in the companie of the right noble *Claudio*. 70

*Beat.* O Lord! he will hang vpon him like a diseafe! hee is sooner caught than the pestilence; and the taker runs presently madde! God help the noble *Claudio*! if he haue caught the *Benedicte*, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a be cured. 74

*Mess.* I will holde friends with you, Ladie!

*Beat.* Do, good friend!

*Leon.* You will neuer runne madde, Niece!

*Beat.* No, not till a hote Iannary! 78

*Mess.* Don *Pedro* is approacht.

*Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICKE, BALTHASAR and JOHN the Bastard.*

*Pedro.* Good signior *Leonato*, are you come to meet your trouble? The fashion of the world is, to auoyd cost; and you encounter it! 82

*Leon.* Neuer came trouble to my house, in the likenesse of your Grace; for, trouble being gone, comfort should remaine: but when you depart from mee, sorrow abides, and happines takes his leaue. 86

*Pedro.* You embrace your charge too willingly! [*points to HERO*] I thincke this is your daughter.

*Leonato.* Her mother hath many times tolde me so.

*Bened.* Were you in doubt, sir, that you askt her? 90

*Leonato.* Signior *Benedicke*, no! for then were you a child!

---

80. *are you*] Q. you are F.

90. *sir*] Q. F om.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Pedro.* You haue it full, *Benedicke!* wee may ghesse by this, what you are, being a man. Truly the Lady fathers her selfe. Be happy, Lady! for you are like an honourable father. 95

*Ben.\** If Signior *Leonato* be her father, she would not haue his head on her shoulders for all *Messina*, as like him as she is.

*Beat.* I wonder that you will still be talking, signior *Benedicke!* No body markes you! 99

*Bene.* What! my deere lady *Disdaine!* Are you yet liuing?

*Bea.* Is it possible *Disdaine* should die, while she hath such meete foode to feede it, as signior *Benedicke?* Curtesie it selfe must conuert to *Disdaine*, if you come in her presence! 103

*Bene.* Then is Curtesie a turne-coate. But it is certaine I am loued of all Ladies, onelie you excepted: and I would I could finde in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for truly, I loue none. 107

*Beat.* A deere happinesse to women! they would else haue bene troubled with a pernicious suter. I thanke God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that! I had rather heare my Dog barke at a Crow, than a man sweare he loues me! 112

*Bene.* God keepe your Ladiship still in that mind! so some Gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratcht face.

*Beat.* 'Scratching' could not make it worse, and twere such a face as yours were. 116

*Bene.* Well, you are a rare Parrat teacher!

*Beat.* A bird of my tongue, is better than a beaft of yours!

*Ben.* I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer! But keep your way a Gods name! I haue done. 121

*Beat.* You alwayes end with a iades tricke: I knowe you of olde! 123

*Pedro.* That is the summe of all. ¶ *Leonato!*—¶ Signior *Claudio*, and signior *Benedicke!* my deere friend *Leonato* hath inuited you all. I tell bim we shall stay here, at the least a moneth; and he heartily praies some occasion may detaine vs longer. I dare sweare he is no hypocrite, but praies from his heart. 129

\*96. *Ben.*] F. Be. Q.

124. *That*] This F.



*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Leon.* If you sweare, my Lord, you shall not be forsworne.  
[*To Sir IOHN*] Let mee bidde you welcome, my Lord! being reconciled to the Prince your brother, I owe you all duetie.

*Iohn.* I thanke you! I am not of many wordes, but I thanke you. 134

*Leon.* [*to PED.*] Pleafe it your grace leade on?

*Pedro.* Your hand, *Leonato*; we wil go together!

[*Exeunt. Manent BENEDICKE & CLAUDIO.*]

*Clau.* *Benedicke*! didst thou note the daughter of Signior *Leonato*? 138

*Bene.* I noted her not, but I lookte on her.

*Clau.* Is she not a modest yong Ladie?

*Bene.* Do you question me as an honest man should doe, for my simple true iudgement? or would you haue me speake after my custome, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

*Claudio.* No! I pray thee speake in sober iudgement. 144

*Bene.* Why, yfaith, me thinks shees too low for a hie praise, too browne for a faire praise, and too litle for a great praise. Onlie this commendation I can affoord her, that, were shee other then she is, she were vnhanfome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her! 149

*Claudio.* Thou thinkest I am in sport. I pray thee tell mee truelie how thou lik'st her!

*Bene.* Would you buie her, that you enquier after her?

*Claudio.* Can the world buie such a iewel? 153

*Bene.* Yea, and a case to putte it into! But speake you this with a sad brow? or doe you play the flowting *Iacke*, to tell vs *Cupid* is a good Hare-finder, and *Vulcan* a rare Carpenter? Come! in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song? 158

*Claudio.* In mine eie, shee is the sweetest Ladie that euer I lookt on!

*Bened.* I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter. Theres her cofin, and she were not posselt with a fury, exceedes her as much in beautie, as the first of Maedooth the last of December! But I hope you haue no intent to turne husband, haue you? 165

*Claudio.* I would scarce trust myselfe, though I had sworne the contrarie, if *Hero* would be my wife.

*Bened.* Ist come to this? In faith, hath not the worlde

*Much ado about Nothing.*

One man but he will weare his cappe with fufpition? Shall I neuer see a batcheller of three fcore againe? Go to, yfaith! and thou wilt needes thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and figh away Sundaies! Looke! don *Pedro* is returned to feeke you. 173

*Re-enter DON PEDRO.*<sup>1</sup>

*Pedro.* What fecret hath held you here, that you followed not to *Leonatoes*?

*Bene.* I would your Grace would conftraine me to tell.

*Pedro.* I charge thee on thy allegiance! 177

*Ben.* You heare, Count *Claudio*! I can be fecret as a dumb man; I woulde haue you thinke fo; but, 'on my allegiance,' marke you this, 'on my allegiance': ¶he is in loue! With who? Now that is your Graces part. Marke how fhort his anfwer is: With *Hero*, *Leonatoes* fhort daughter!

*Clau.* If this were fo, fo were it vtred. 183

*Bened.* Like the olde tale, my Lord: 'it is not fo, nor twas not fo: but indeede, God forbid it fhould be fo!'

*Claudio.* If my paffion change not fhortly, 'God forbid it fhould be' otherwife! 187

*Pedro.* Amen! if you loue her; for the Lady is very well worthy.

*Claudio.* You fpeake this to fetch me in, my Lord.

*Pedro.* By my troth, I fpeake my thought. 191

*Claudio.* And in faith, my Lord, I fpoke mine.

*Bened.* And by my two faiths and troths, my Lorde, I fpoke mine!

*Clau.* That I loue her, I feele. 195

*Pedro.* That fhe is worthy, I know.

*Bened.* That I neither feele how fhe fhould be loued, nor know how fhe fhould be worthie, is the opinion that fire can not melt out of me: I will die in it at the ftake! 199

*Pedro.* Thou wafte euer an obftinate heretique in the defpight of Beauty.

*Clau.* And neuer could maintaine his part, but in the force of his wil. 203

*Bene.* That a woman conceiued me, I thanke her: that

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<sup>1</sup> Q & F add '*John the bastard.*' 194. *spoke*] Q. fpeake F.  
I. i. 169-204.] 6

*Much ado about Nothing.*

she brought me vp, I likewise giue her most humble thanks: but that I will haue a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an intuifible baldricke, all women shall pardon mee! Because I will not doe them the wrong to mistrust any, I will doe my selfe the right to trust none: and the fine is,' (for the which I may go the finer,) I will liue a bachelier. 211

*Pedro.* I shall see thee, ere I die, looke pale with loue.

*Bene.* With anger, with sickenesse, or with hunger, my Lord; not with 'loue'! Proue that euer I loofe more blood with 'loue' then I will get againe with drinking, picke out mine eies with a Ballad-makers penne, and hang me vp at the doore of a brothel house for the signe of blinde *Cupid*! 217

*Pedro.* Well, if euer thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prooue a notable argument.

*Bene.* If I do, hang me in a bottle like a Cat, and shoote at me! and he that hits me, let him be clapt on the shoulder, and calld '*Adam*'! 222

*Pedro.* Well, as time shall trie:

'In time the sauage Bull doth beare the yoake!'

*Bene.* 'The sauage bull' may; but if euer the sensible *Benedicke* beare it, plucke off the bulls hornes, and set them in my forehead; and let me be vildly painted; and in such great letters as they write, 'Here is good horse to hyre': let them signifie vnder my signe, 'Here you may see *Benedicke* the married man!' 230

*Claudio.* If this should euer happen, thou wouldst be 'horn madde.'

*Pedro.* Nay, if *Cupid* haue not spent all his quiuer in *Venice*, thou wilt quake for this shortly. 234

*Bened.* I looke for an earthquake too, then.

*Pedro.* Well, you will temporize with the howres. In the meane time, good signior *Benedicke*, repaire to *Leonatoes*! Commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at supper; for indeede he hath made great preparation. 239

*Bened.* I haue almost matter enough in mee for suche an Embassage, and so I commit you . . .

*Clau.* To the tuition of God: from my house, if I had it . . .

*Pedro.* The sixt of Iuly: your louing friend, *Benedicke*. 243

*Bened.* Nay, mocke not, mocke not! The body of your

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guardes are but slightly basted on, neither. Ere you flowt old ends any further, examine your conscience; and so I leaue you. 247

[*Erit.*

*Claudio.* My Liege, your Highnesse nowe may doe mee good!

*Pedro.* My loue is thine to teach. Teach it but how, 249  
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learne  
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

*Clau.* Hath *Leonato* any sonne, my Lord?

*Pedro.* No childe but *Hero*; shees his onely heire. 253  
Dooft thou affect her, *Claudio*?

*Claudio.* O, my Lord,  
When you went onward on this ended action,  
I lookt vpon her with a souldiers eie,  
That likt, but had a rougher taske in hand, 257  
Than to driue liking to the name of 'loue':  
But now I am returnde, and that warre-thoughts  
Haue left their places vacant, in their roomes  
Come thronging soft and delicate desires, 261  
All prompting mee, how faire yong *Hero* is  
Saying 'I likt her ere I went to warres!'

*Pedro.* Thou wilt be like a louer presently,  
And tire the hearer with a booke of words. 265  
If thou dost loue faire *Hero*, cherish it,  
And I wil breake with hir, and with her father,  
And thou shalt haue her. Waft not to this end,  
That thou beganst to twist so fine a storie? 269

*Clau.* How sweetly you do minister to loue,  
That know loues griefe by his complexion!  
But lest my liking might too sodaine seeme,  
I would haue salude it with a longer treatise. 273

*Pedro.* What need the bridge much broder then the flood?  
The fairest graunt is the necessitie:  
Looke! what wil serue, is fit: tis once, thou louest,  
And I wil fit thee with the remedie. 277  
I know we shall haue reuelling to night;  
I wil affume thy part in some disguise,

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267-8. and with . . . her] Q. | 270. you do] Q. do you F.  
not in F. | 273. salude = salv'd.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

And tell faire *Hero* I am *Claudio*,  
And in her bosome Ile vnclafpe my heart, 281  
And take her hearing prisoner, with the force  
And strong incounter of my amorous tale:  
Then after, to her father will I breake;  
And the conclusion is, she shal be thine. 285  
In practise let vs put it presently! [*Exeunt.*]

*Actus Secundus. Scena Prima. [Usually I. II.]*

*In LEONATOES House.*

*Enter LEONATO, and an old man, ANTHONIO, brother to  
LEONATO.*

*Leo.* How now, brother! Where is my cosen, your sonne?  
Hath he prouided this musique?

*Old Anthonio.* He is very busie about it. But, brother, I  
can tell you strange newes that you yet dreamt not of. 4

*Leo.* Are they good?

*Old Anthonio.* As the euents stampes them: but they haue  
a good couer; they shew well outward. The Prince and  
Count *Claudio*, walking in a thicke pleached alley in mine  
orchard, were thus much ouer-heard by a man of mine: the  
Prince discovered to *Claudio* that he loued my niece, your [10  
daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a  
daunce; and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the  
present time by the top, and instantly breake with you of it.

*Leo.* Hath the fellow any wit that told you this? 14

*Old Anthonio.* A good sharp fellow: I wil send for him;  
and question him your selfe!

*Leo.* No, no! we wil hold it as a dreame til it appeare it  
self: but I will acquaint my daughter withall, that she may  
bee the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be  
true. Go you and tel hir of it! [*Exit ANT.*] [*Enter Kins-  
men.*] ¶ Coosins! you know what you haue to doe. ¶ O, I crie  
you mercie, friend! go you with me, and I wil vse your  
skill.\* ¶ Good Cofin, haue a care this busie time! [*Exeunt.* 23

4. *strange*] om F.

\**skill*] F. shill Q.

9. *much*] om F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Actus Secundus. Scena Secunda. [Usually l. iii.]*

*In LEONATOES House.*

*Enter Sir JOHN the bastard, and CONRADE his companion.*

*Con.* What the good yeere, my Lord! Why are you thus out of meafure fad?

*John.* There is no 'meafure' in the occafion that breeds; therefore the fadneffe is without limit. 4

*Con.* You fhould heare reafon.

*John.* And when I haue heard it, what bleffing brings it?

*Con.* If not a prefent remedy, at leaft a patient fufferance.

*John.* I wonder that thou (being, as thou faift thou art, [8 borne vnder *Saturne*,) goeft about to apply a morall medicine, to a mortifying mifchiefe. I cannot hide what I am: I muft be fad when I haue caufe, and fmile at no mans iefts; eate when I haue ftomack, and wait for no mans leifure; fleep when I am drowfie, and tend on no mans bufineffe; laugh when I am mery, and claw no man in his humor. 14

*Con.* Yea, but you muft not make the full fhew of this till you may do it without controllment. You haue of late ftoode out againft your brother, and he hath tane you newly into his grace, where it is impoffible you fhould take true [18 root, but by the faire weather that you make your felf. It is needful that you frame the feafon for your owne harueft.

*John.* I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rofe in his grace! and it better fits my bloud to be difdain'd of all, then to fashion a cariage to rob loue from any. In this, (though I cannot be faid to be a flatering honeft man,) it muft not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villaine! I am [25 trusted with a muffel, and enfranchifde with a clogge; therefore I haue decreed, not to fmg in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking! in the mean time, let me be that I am, and feeke not to alter me! 30

*Con.* Can you make no vfe of your difcontent?

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6. *brings*] Q. bringeth F.

18. *true*] Q. F om.

II. ii. 1-31.]

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*John.* I make all 'vse' of it, for I 'vse' it only. Who comes here?

*Enter BORACHIO.*

What newes, *Borachio*? 34

*Bor.* I came yonder from a great supper: the Prince your brother is royally entertain'd by *Leonato*, and I can giue you intelligence of an intended mariage. 37

*John.* Wil it serue for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a foole that betrothes himselfe to vnquietnesse?

*Bor.* Mary, it is your brothers\* right hand.

*John.* Who? the most exquisite *Claudio*? 41

*Bor.* Euen he.

*John.* A proper squier! And who, and who? Which way looks he? 44

*Bor.* Mary, on† *Hero*, the daughter and heire of *Leonato*.

*John.* A very forward March-chicke! How came you to this? 47

*Bor.* Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoaking a musty roome, comes me the Prince and *Claudio*, hand in hand, in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras; and [50 there heard it agreed vpon, that the Prince should wooe *Hero* for himselfe, and hauing obtain'd her, giue her to Counte *Claudio*. 53

*John.* Come, come, let vs thither! this may proue food to my displeasure. That yong Start-vp hath all the glory of my ouerthrow: if I can crosse him any way, I blesse my selfe euery way! ¶ You are both fure, and wil assist me? 57

*Conr.* To the death, my Lord!

*John.* Let vs to the great supper! their cheere is the greater, that I am subdued. Would the Cooke were a my mind! Shall we go proue whats to be done? 61

*Bor.* Weele wait vpon your Lordship! [*Exeunt.*‡

32. *make*] Q. will make F.

33. *Enter . . .*] after l. 33 Q, F.

\*40. *brothers*] F. bothers Q.

†45. *on*] F. one Q.

50. *me*] Q. F om.

‡62. *Exeunt*] F. exit Q.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Actus Secundus.\* Scena Tertia. [Usually II. i.]*

*A Hall in LEONATOES House.*

*Enter LEONATO, his brother ANTHONIO, his wife INNOGEN, HERO his daughter, and BEATRICE his neece, also MARGARET, and a Kinsman.*

*Leonato.* Was not Counte *John* here at supper?

*Brother.* [ANTHONIO] I saw him not.

*Beatrice.* How tartely that gentleman looks! I neuer can see him, but I am heart-burn'd an hower after! 4

*Hero.* He is of a very melancholy disposition.

*Beatrice.* He were an excellent man, that were made iust in the mid-way between him and *Benedick*: the one is too like an image, and saies nothing; and the other, too like my Ladies eldest sonne, euermore tatling. 9

*Leonato.* Then, halfe Signior *Benedickes* tongue in Counte *Johns* mouth, and halfe Counte *Johns* melancholy in Signior *Benedickes* face . . . 12

*Beatrice.* With a good legge and a good foote, Vnckle, and money inough in his purse: such a man would winne any woman in the world; if a could get her good will. 15

*Leonato.* By my troth, Neece, thou wilt neuer get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue!

*Brother.* Infaith, shees too curst. 18

*Beatrice.* 'Too curst' is more then curst: I shall lessen Gods sending that way; for it is saide, 'God sends a curst cow short hornes'; but to a cow 'too curst,' he sends none.

*Leonato.* So, by being 'too curst,' God will send you no hornes? 23

*Beatrice.* Iust! if he send me no husband: for the which blessing, I am at him vpon my knees euery morning and euening. Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face! I had rather lie in the woollen! 27

*Leonato.* You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

*Beatrice.* What should I do with him? dresse him in my

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\* *Actus Secundus*] F.

15. a.] Q. he F.



*Much adoe about Nothing.*

apparell, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a beard, is more then a youth; and he that hath no beard, is lesse then a man: and he that is more then a youth, is not for me; and he that is lesse then a man, I am not for him: therefore I will euen take sixpence in earnest of the Berrord, and leade his apes into hell. 35

*Leonato.* Well then! go you into hell?

*Beatrice.* No! but to the gate: And there will the Diuell meete me, like an old cuckold, with hornes on his head, and say, 'Get you to heauen, *Beatrice!* get you to heauen! heeres no place for you maids!' So deliuer I vp my apes, and away to Saint *Peter* for the heauens: he shewes me where the Bachelers sit; and there liue we as mery as the day is long!

*Brother.* [to **HERO**] Well, Neece, I trust you will be rulde by your father. 44

*Beatrice.* Yes, faith, it is my cofens dnetie to make curfie and say, 'Father, as it please you!' ¶ But yet for all that, cofin, let him be a handsome fellow; or else make an other curfie, and say, 'Father, as it please me!' 48

*Leonato.* Well, Neece, I hope to see you one day fitted wth a husband.

*Beatrice.* Not til God make men of some other mettal then earth! Would it not grieue a woman to be ouer-masserd with a peece of valiant duft? to make an account of her life to a clod of waiward marle? No, Vnckle, ile none! *Adams* sonnes are my brethren; and truely I holde it a sinne to match in my kinred. 56

*Leonato.* Daughter, remember what I told you! If the Prince do folicite you in that kind, you know your answer. 58

*Beatrice.* The fault will be in the musique, Cofin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the Prince be too important, tell him 'there is measure in euery thing,' and so daunce out the answer. For, here me, *Hero!* wooing, wedding, and [62 repenting, is as a *Scotch* ijgge,<sup>1</sup> a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suite is hot and hafty, like a *Scotch* ijgge<sup>1</sup> (and ful as fantastical); the Wedding manerly modest, (as a measure,)

35. *Berrord* is bear-ward, keeper of bears.

36. *Leonato*] Lenoato Q.

<sup>1</sup> *ijgge*, jig. 'ii' was generally written and printed *ij*, so that *jigge* was set *ijgge*.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

full of state and aunchentry; and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faster and faster, til he sincke into his graue. 68

*Leonato.* Cofin, you apprehend passing shrewdly!

*Beatrice.* I haue a good eie, Vnckle! I can see a church by day-light. 71

*Leonato.* The reuellers are entring. Brother, make good roome! [All mask.]

*Enter Prince PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and BENEDICKE, and BALTHASER; DON IOHN, & BORACHIO; &, opposite, VRSULA; all Maskers, with a Drum.\* [PEDRO takes HERO; BENED., BEATRICE; BALTH., MARGARET; & ANTHO., VRSULA.]*

*Pedro.* [to HERO] Lady, will you walke about with your Friend? 75

*Hero.* So you 'walke' softly, and looke sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the 'walke'; and especially when I 'walk' away.

*Pedro.* With me in your company? 79

*Hero.* I may say so, when I please.

*Pedro.* And when 'please' you to 'say so'?

*Hero.* When I like your fauour; for God defend the lute should be like the case! 83 [Loue.]

*Pedro.* My vifor is *Philemons* roofe: Within the house, is

*Hero.* Why, then, your 'vifor' should be thatcht.

*Pedro.* Speake low, if you speake loue! [Leads her away.]

*Balth.* [to MARG.] Well, I would you did like me! 87

*Mar.* So would not I, for your owne sake; for I haue many ill qualities.

*Balth.* Which is one?

*Mar.* I say my praers alowd. 91

*Balth.* I loue you the better; the hearers may cry 'Amen!'

*Marg.* God match me with a good dauncer!

*Balth.* Amen! 94

*Marg.* And God keepe him out of my sight when the daunce is done! Answer, Clarke!

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*Don*] or dumb Q, or dumbe F. | 87, 90, 92. *Balth.*] Theobald.  
\* *Maskers with a drum*] F. | Bene. Q, F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Balth.* No more words, the Clarke is answered. 97  
[Leads her away.]

*Vrsula.* [to ANTH.] I know you well enough! you are  
signior *Anthonio*!

*Antho.* At a word, I am not!

*Vrsula.* I knowe you by the wagling of your head.

*Antho.* To tell you true, I counterfeit him. 102

*Vrsula.* You coulde neuer doe him fo ill well, vnlesse you  
were the very man! heeres his drie hand vp and downe: you  
are he! you are he!

*Antho.* At a word, I am not! 106

*Vrsula.* Come, come! do you thinke I do not know you  
by your excellent wit? Can vertue hide it selfe? Go to!  
mumme! you are he! graces will appeere! and theres an end.

[ANT. leads her away.]

*Beat.* [to BEN.] Will you not tell me who tolde you fo? 110

*Bened.* No! you shall pardon me.

*Beat.* Nor will you not tell me who you are?

*Bened.* Not now. 113

*Beat.* 'That I was disdainefull, and that I had my good wit  
out of the *Hundred Mery Tales*!' Wel! this was signior  
*Benedick* that said so.

*Bened.* Whats he? 117

*Beat.* I am fure you know him well enough.

*Bened.* Not I; beleeeue me!

*Beat.* Did he neuer make you laugh?

*Bened.* I pray you, what is he? 121

*Beat.* Why, he is the Princes ieafter! a very dul fool! only  
his gift is, in deuifing impossible flauders: none but Liber-  
tines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit,  
but in his villanie; for he both pleases men, and augers them;  
and then they laugh at him, and beate him. I am fure he is  
in the Fleete! I would he had boarded me! 127

*Bene.* When I know the Gentleman, ile tell him what  
you say. 129

*Beat.* Do, do! heele but break a comparifon or two on me;  
which, peraduenture, (not markt, or not laught at,) strikes him  
into melancholy; and then theres a partridge wing faued, for  
the foole will eate no supper that night! Wee must follow  
the Leaders. [The Dancers begin to take their places. 134

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Bene.* In every good thing.

*Beat.* Nay, if they leade to any ill, I will leaue them at the next turning. 137

[*Musicke.\** *Dance.* *Exeunt all save JOHN, BORACHIO, CLAUDIO.*

*John.* [to *BOR.*] Sure, my brother is amorous on *Hero*, and hath withdrawne her father to breake with him about it. The Ladies follow her, and but one vifor remaines. 140

*Borachio.* And that is *Claudio*. I knowe him by his bearing.

*John.* [to *CLAU.*] Are not you signior *Benedicke*?

*Clau.* You know me well: I am he! 143

*John.* Signior, you are very neere my brother in his loue: he is enamourd on *Hero*. I pray you diffwade him from her: she is no equall for his birth. You may doe the parte of an honest man in it. 147

*Claudio.* How know you he loues her?

*John.* I heard him sweare his affection.

*Borac.* So did I too! and he fwore hee would marry her to-night. 151

*John.* Come, let vs to the banquet! [*Exeunt: manet CLAU.*

*Claud.* Thus answer I in name of *Benedicke*,  
But heare these ill newes with the eares of *Claudio*!  
Tis certaine so! The Prince wooes for himselfe! 155

Friendship is constant in all other things,  
Saue in the office and affaires of loue:  
Therefore all hearts in loue vse their owne tongues.  
Let every eie negotiate for it selfe, 159

And trust no Agent! for Beauty is a witch,  
Against whose charmes, Faith melteth into blood:  
This is an accident of houely prooffe,  
Which I mistrusted not. Farewel, therefore, *Hero*! 163

*Re-enter BENEDICKE.*

*Benedicke.* Count *Claudio*?

*Claudio.* Yea, the same.

*Bene.* Come! will you go with me?

*Claudio.* Whither? 167

*Bene.* Euen to the next willow, about your owne bufnes,

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\*137. *Musicke*] *Musicke* for the dance. F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

County. What fashion will you weare the Garland of? about your necke, like an Vfurers chaine? or vnder your arme, like a Lieutenants scarffe? You mnst weare it one way, for the Prince hath got your *Hero*. 172

*Claudio*. I wish him ioy of her!

*Bened.* Why, thats spoken like an honest Drouier: so they fell Bullockes! But did you thinke the Prince would haue ferued you thus? 176

*Claudio*. I pray you, leane me!

*Benedicke*. Ho! now you strike like the blindman: twas the boy that stole your meate, and youle beate the post.

*Claudio*. If it will not be, Ile leaue you. [*Exit.* 180

*Benedicke*. Alas, poore hurt foule! now will hee creepe into fedges! But that my Ladie *Beatrice* should know me, and not know mee! 'The Princes foole!' Hah! It may be I goe vnder that title, because I am merry. Yea, but so I [184 am apte to doe my selfe wrong: I am not so reputed! It is the base (though bitter) disposition of *Beatrice*, that puts the world into her person, and so giues me out. Well, ile be reuenged as I may! 188

*Re-enter the Prince.\**

*Pedro*. Now, signior, wheres the Counte? did you see him?

*Benedicke*. Troth, my Lord, I haue played the part of Ladie *Fame*. I found him heere as melancholy as a Lodge in a Warren. I tolde him, and I thinke I tolde him true, that [192 your Grace had got the goodwil of this yoong Lady<sup>1</sup>; and I offred him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to binde him vp a rod, as being worthie to bee whipt. 196

*Pedro*. 'To be whipt'? whats his fault?

*Benedicke*. The flatte transgression of a Schoole-boy, who, being oner-ioyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companion; and he steales it. 200

*Pedro*. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

*Benedicke*. Yet it had not benee amisse, the rodde had benee made, & the garland too; for the garland, he might

\*189. Q adds '*Hero, Leonato,* | omits them.  
*Ioan and Borachio, and Conrade.*' F | <sup>1</sup> *Hero*.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

haue worn himfelfe; and the rodde, he might haue beftowed on you, who (as I take it) haue ftolne his birds neft. 206

*Pedro.* I wil but teach them to fing, and reftore them to the owner.

*Benedicke.* If their finging anſwer your ſaying, by my faith you ſay honeftly. 210

*Pedro.* The Ladie *Beatrice* hath a quarrell to you: the Gentleman that daunft with her, told her ſhee is much wrongd by you. 213

*Bened.* O, ſhee miſuſde me paſt the indurance of a blocke! An oake but with one greene leafe on it, would haue anſwered her! my very viſor beganne to aſſume life, and ſcold with her! She tolde me, (not thinking I had beene my ſelfe,) that I was the Princes ieſter! that I was duller than a great thawe! [218 huddling ieſt vpon ieſt, with ſuch impoſſible conueiance vpon me, that I ſtoode like a man at a marke, with a wholy army ſhooting at me. She ſpeakes poynyards; and euere word ſtabbes. If her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no liuing neere her; ſhee would infect to [223 the north ſtarre! I woulde not marry her, though ſhee were indowed with al that *Adam* had left him before he tranſgreſt! She would haue made *Hercules* haue turnd ſpit, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too! Come, talke not of her! you ſhall find her the infernall *Ate* in good apparell! [228 I woulde to God ſome ſcholler woulde coniure her; for certainly, while ſhe is heere, a man may liue as quiet in hell, as in a ſanctuarie; and people ſinne vpon purpoſe, becauſe they would goe thither: ſo, indeede, all diſquiet, horreur, and perturbation followes her. 233

*Enter CLAUDIO and BEATRICE, LEONATO, HERO.\**

*Pedro.* Looke! heere ſhe comes!

*Benedicke.* Will your Grace command me any ſeruice to the worldes end? I will go on the ſlighteſt arrand now to the *Antypodes* that you can deniſe to ſend mee on! I will [237 fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furtheſt inch of *Aſia*; bring you the length of Preſter *Iohns* foot; fetch you a haire off the great *Chams* beard; doe you any embaſſage to the

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\*233. *Leonato, Hero*] F. Q om.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Pigmies*; rather than holde three words conference, with this Harpy! You haue no imployment for me? 242

*Pedro*. None, but to desire your good company.

*Benedicke*. O God, fir! heeres a dish I loue not. I cannot indure my Ladie Tongue! [Exit.]

*Pedro*. Come, Lady, come! You haue lost the heart of signior *Benedicke*. 247

*Beatrice*. Indeed, my Lord, he lent it me awhile; and I gaue him vse for it, a double heart for his single one! Mary, once before he wonne it of me, with false dice; therefore your Grace may well say 'I haue lost' it. 251

*Pedro*. You haue put him downe, Lady; you haue put him downe!

*Beatrice*. So I would not he should do me, my Lord, left I should prouue the mother of fooles! I haue brought Counte *Claudio*, whom you sent me to seeke. 256

*Pedro*. Why, how now, Counte? Wherefore are you sad?

*Claudio*. Not 'sad', my Lord!

*Pedro*. How then? sicke?

*Claudio*. Neither, my Lord! 260

*Beatrice*. The Counte is neither 'sad,' nor 'sicke,' nor merry, nor well: ¶ but ciuill, Counte, ciuill as an orange, and something of that iealous complexion. 263

*Pedro*. Ifaith, Lady, I think your blazon to be true; though Ile be sworne, if he be so, his conceit is false! ¶ Heere, *Claudio*! I haue wooed in thy name; and faire *Hero* is won! I haue broke with her father; and his good will obtained. Name the day of marriage; and 'God giue thee ioy!' 269

*Leonato*. Counte, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes! his Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

*Beatrice*. Speake, Counte! tis your Qu. 273

*Claudio*. Silence is the perfectest Herauld of ioy. I were but little happy, if I could say how much! ¶ Lady! as you are mine, I am yours! I giue away my selfe for you, and doate vpon the exchange. 277

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245. *my*] Q. this F.

263. *that*] Q. a F.

268. See note on *Loues Labors Lost*, V. ii. 448.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Beat.* Speake, cofin! or (if you cannot,) stop his mouth with a kisse, and let not him speake neither.

*Pedro.* Infaith, Lady, you haue a merry heart! 280

*Beatr.* Yea, my Lord! I thanke it, poore foole; it keeps on the windy side of Care. [*Points to HERO & CL.*] My cofin tells him in his eare, that he is in her heart.

*Clau.* And so she doth, Cofin. 284

*Beat.* Good Lord, for aliance! Thus goes euery one to the world but I, and I am sun-burnt: I may fit in a corner, and crie, 'heigh ho for a husband!'

*Pedro.* Lady *Beatrice*, I will get you one. 288

*Beat.* I would rather haue one of your fathers getting! Hath your Grace ne're a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands; if a maide coulde come by them.

*Prince.* Will you haue me, Lady? 292

*Beatr.* No, my Lord, vnles I might haue another for working-daies: your Grace is too costly to weare euery day. But I beseech your Grace, pardon me! I was born to speake all mirth, and no matter. 296

*Prince.* Your silence most offends me; and to be merry, best becomes you; for, out a question, you were borne in a merry hower. 299

*Beatr.* No, sure, my Lord, my mother cried; but then there was a starre daunst; and vnder that was I borne. ¶ Cofins, 'God giue you ioy'! 302

*Leonato.* Neece, will you looke to those things I tolde you of?

*Beat.* I crie you mercy, Vncle! ¶ By your Graces pardon!  
[*Exit BEATRICE.*]

*Prince.* By my troth, a pleasant spirited lady! 306

*Leon.* Theres little of the melancholy element in her, my Lord! she is neuer sad, but when she sleeps, & not euer sad then; for I haue heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamt of unhappines, and wakt her selfe with laughing.

*Pedro.* She cannot indure to heare tell of a husband. 311

*Leonato.* O, by no meanes! she mockes al her wooers out of sute.

*Prince.* She were an excellent wife for *Benedick*! 314

*Leonato.* O Lord, my lord! if they were but a weeke married, they would talke themselues madde!



*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Prince.* Countie *Claudio*, when meane you to goe to Church?

*Clau.* To morow, my Lord! Time goes on crutches, til Loue haue all his rites. 319

*Leonato.* Not til Monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a iust feuennight; and a time too briefe too, to haue al things answere my mind. 322

*Prince.* Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but I warrant thee, *Claudio*, the time shall not goe dully by vs! I wil, in the interim, vndertake one of *Hercules* labors, which is, to bring Signior *Benedick* and the Lady *Beatrice* into a mountaine of affection, th' one with th' other. I would faine haue it a match; and I doubt not but to fashon it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall giue you direction.

*Leonato.* My Lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights watchings! 331

*Claud.* And I, my Lord!

*Prince.* And you too, gentle *Hero*? 333

*Hero.* I wil do any modest office, my Lord, to help my Cofin to a good husband. 335

*Prince.* And *Benedicke* is not the vnhopefullest husband that I know. Thus farre can I praise him: he is of a noble strain, of approoued valour, and confirmde honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cofin, that she shall fall in loue with *Benedicke*; and I, [to L. & CL.] with your two [340 helps, wil so practise on *Benedicke*, that in dispight of his quicke wit, and his queasie stomacke, he shall fall in loue with *Beatrice*. If we can do this, *Cupid* is no longer an Archer; his glory shall bee ours, for we are the onely loue-gods. Goe in with mee, and I will tell you my drift. [Exeunt. 345

*Actus Secundus. Scena Quarta. [Usually II. ii.]*

*In LEONATOES House.*

*Enter IOHN and BORACHIO.*

*John.* It is so! the Counte *Claudio* shall marry the daughter of *Leonato*.

*Bora.* Yea, my Lord, but I can crosse it. 3

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345. *Exeunt*] exit Q, F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*John.* Any barre, any crosse, any impediment, will be [4  
medcinable to me! I am sicke in displeasure to him; and  
whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with  
mine. How canst thou crosse this marriage? 7

*Bor.* Not honestly, my Lord; but so couertly, that no dis-  
honesty shall appear in me!

*John.* Shew me briefly how. 10

*Bor.* I thinke I told your Lordship a yeere since, how much  
I am in the fauour of *Margaret*, the waiting gentlewoman to  
*Hero*.

*John.* I remember. 14

*Bor.* I can, at any vnseasonable instant of the night, ap-  
point her to looke out at her Ladies chamber window.

*John.* What life is in that, to be the death of this mariage?

*Bor.* The poison of that, lies in you to temper! Goe you  
to the Prince your brother; spare not to tell him, that he  
hath wronged his honor in marrying the renown'd *Claudio*,  
(whose estimation do you mightily hold vp,) to a contamin-  
ated stale, such a one as *Hero*. 22

*John.* What prooffe shall I make of that?

*Bor.* Prooffe enough, to misuse the Prince, to vexe *Claudio*, to  
vndoe *Hero*, and kill *Leonato*! Looke you for any other issue?

*John.* Onely to disspight them, I will endenour any thing! [26

*Bor.* Go, then! find me a meet houre to draw don *Pedro*  
and the Counte *Claudio* alone; tell them that you know that  
*Hero* loues me; intend a kind of zeale both to the Prince &  
*Claudio* (as in loue of your brothers honor, who hath made [30  
this match, and his friends reputation, who is thus like to bee  
cofen'd with the semblance of a maid,) that you haue dis-  
couer'd thus. They wil scarcely beleeeue this without triall: [33  
offer them instances, which shall beare no lesse likelihood, than  
to see me at her chamber window, heare me call *Margaret*  
'*Hero*', heare *Margaret* terme me '*Borachio*', & bring [36  
them to see this, the very night before the intended wedding,  
(for in the mean time, I wil so fashion the matter, that *Hero*

27. *don*] Q. on F.

30. *in loue*] Q. in a loue F.

36. *Borachio*] Pope, ed. 2 (Theobald). *Claudio* Q, F. (Possibly the slip was Shakspeare's. Having changed *Margaret* to *Hero*, he

II. iv. 4-38.]

may have unthinkingly altered *Borachio* to *Claudio*, forgetting that his "*Hero loves me*" (l. 29) necessitated *Margaret's* calling out '*Borachio*'.)

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

shal be absent,) and there shal appeere such seeming truth of  
*Heroes* disloyaltie, that iealousie shal be cald assurance, and al  
the preparation ouerthrowne. 41

*Iohn.* Grow this to what aduerse issue it can, I will put it  
in practise! Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a  
thousand ducates! 44

*Bor.* Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning  
shall not shame me.

*Iohn.* I will presently go learne their day of marriage. 47  
[*Exeunt.*]

*Actus Tertius. Scena Prima. [Usually II. iii.]*

*In LEONATOES Orchard.*

*Enter BENEDICKE alone.*

*Bene.* Boy! [Enter Boy.]

*Boy.* Signior!

*Bene.* In my chamber window lies a booke; bring it hither  
to me in the orchard! 4

*Boy.* I am here already, fir!

*Bene.* I know that; but I would haue thee hence, and here  
again. [*Exit Boy.*] I do much wonder, that one man, seeing  
how much an other man is a foole, when he dedicates his  
behaviours to Loue, wil, after he hath laughd at such shallow  
follies in others, becom the argument of his owne scorne, by  
falling in loue; and such a man is *Claudio*. I haue knowne [11  
when there was no musique with him but the drumme and  
the fife; and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe:  
I haue knowne when he would haue walkt ten mile afoot, to  
see a good armour; and now wil he lie ten nights awake,  
caruing the fashon of a new dublet. He was wont to [16  
speake plaine, and to the purpose (like an honest man and a  
fouldier); and now is he turnd ortography! his words are a  
very fantasticall banquet, iust so many strange dishes! May I  
be so conuerted, and see with these eies? I cannot tell; I [20  
thinke not: I wil not be sworne but Loue may transforme

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45. *you*] Q. thou F. 47. *Exeunt*] exit Q. Exit F.

7. *Exit*] after l. 5 Q, F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

me to an oyster; but Ile take my oath on it, till he haue made an\* oyster of me, he shall neuer make me such a foole! One woman is faire; yet I am well: an other is wife; yet I [24 am well: an other vertuous; yet I am wel! but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shal not com in my grace! rich she shal be; thats certain: wife; or Ile none: vertuous; or Ile neuer cheapen her: faire; or Ile neuer looke on her: [28 mild; or come not neare me: noble; or not I† for an angell: of good discourse; an excellent musician; and her haire shall be of what colour it please God! Hah! the Prince and Monsieur Loue! I wil hide me in the arbor. [Hides. 32

*Enter Prince, LEONATO, CLAUDIO, (and later, Musicke.<sup>1</sup>)*

*Prince.* Come! shall we heare this musique?

*Claud.* Yea, my good lord! How still the euening is,  
As hush't on purpose to grace harmonie!

*Prince.* See you where *Benedicke* hath hid himselfe? 36

*Claud.* O very wel, my lord! the musique ended,  
Weele fit the kid-foxe with a penny worth.

*Enter BALTHASER, (IACKE WILSON§) with Musicke.*

*Prince.* Come, *Balthaser*, weele heare that song againe!

*Balth.* O, good my Lord, take not so bad a voice, 40  
To slander musique any more then once!

*Prince.* It is the witnessse still of excellencie,  
To put a strange face on his owne perfection.<sup>2</sup>  
I pray thee sing; and let me wooe no more! 44

*Balth.* Because you talke of wooing, I will sing;  
Since many a wooer doth commence his sute  
To her he thinkes not worthy, yet he wooes,  
Yet will he sweare he loues.

*Prince.* Nay, pray thee come; 48  
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,  
Do it in notes.

*Balth.* Note this before my notes:  
Theres not a note of mine thats worth the noting!

\*23. an] F. and Q.

†29. I] F. Q om.

<sup>1</sup>Musicke] Q. and Iacke Wilson F.

(A Singer of Burbage's Company.)

§38-39. Iacke . . ] F. See note 1.

<sup>2</sup>F repeats lines 42, 43.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Prince.* Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks, 52  
'Note notes', forfooth, and 'nothing.' [*Musicke plays.*

*Bene.* [*aside*] Now, diuine aire! Now is his foule rauisht!  
Is it not strange that sheepes guts should hale foules out of  
mens bodies? Well, a horne for my mouy, when alls done!

*The Song.*

*Balth.* Sigh no more, Ladies! sigh no more!  
Men were deceiuers euer:  
One foote in sea, and one on shore,  
To one thing constant neuer! 60  
Then sigh not so, but let them go!  
And be you blith and bonnie,  
Conuerting all your foundes of woe,  
Into 'hey nony, nony.' 64  
Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,  
Of dumps so dull and heauy!  
The fraud of men was euer so,  
Since summer first was leauy. 68  
Then sigh not so, &c.

*Prince.* By my troth, a good song!

*Balth.* And an ill finger, my Lord. 71

*Prince.* Ha, no! no, faith! thou singst wel enough for a shift.

*Ben.* [*aside*] And he had bin a dog that should haue howld  
thus, they would haue handg him! and I pray God his bad  
voice bode no mischeefe. I had as liue haue heard the night-  
rauen, come what plague could haue come after it! 76

*Prince.* Yea, mary, dooft thou heare, *Balthasar*? I pray  
thee get vs some excellent musique; for to morow night we  
would haue it at the ladie *Heroes* chamber-window.

*Balth.* The best I can, my Lord. 80

*Prince.* Do so! farewell! [*Exit BALTHASAR.*] ¶ Come  
hither, *Leonato*! What was it you told mee of to-day? that  
your niece *Beatrice* was in loue with signior *Benedicke*?

*Cla.* ([*Aside*] O, I! stalke on, stalk on! the foule fits.) I  
did neuer think that lady would haue loued any man. 85

*Leo.* No, nor I neither! But most wonderful, that she  
should so dote on signior *Benedicke*, whome she hath in all  
outward behaiours seemd euer to abhorre!

*Much ado about Nothing.*

- (*Bene.* If possible? fits the wind in that corner?) 89  
*Leo.* By my troth, my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of it, but that she loues him with an iraged affection. It is past the infinite of thought.  
*Prince.* May be, she doth but counterfeit. 93  
*Claud.* Faith, like enough!  
*Leon.* O God! 'counterfeit'? There was neuer counterfeit of passion, came so neare the life of passion as she discouers it!  
*Prince.* Why, what effects of passion shewes she? 97  
*Claud.* [*Aside*] Baite the hooke wel! this fish will bite.  
*Leon.* What 'effects,' my Lord? she wil fit you, . . . [*to CLAU.*] you heard my daughter tel you how. 100  
*Claud.* She did indeede! 101  
*Prince.* How, how, I pray you? You amaze me! I would haue thought her spirite had beene inuincible against all assaults of affection. 104  
*Leo.* I would haue sworn it had, my Lord; especially against *Benedicke*.  
(*Bene.* I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speakes it: knauery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reuerence.) 109  
*Claud.* [*Aside*] He hath tane th'infection: hold it vp!  
*Prince.* Hath shee made her affection knowne to *Benedicke*?  
*Leonato.* No! and sweares shee neuer will: thats her torment!  
*Claudio.* Tis true, indeed; so your daughter saies: 'Shall I,' saies she, 'that haue so oft encountred him with scorne, write to him that I loue him?' 115  
*Leo.* This saies she now when she is beginning to write to him; for sheel be vp twenty times a night; and there will she sit in her smocke, til she haue writ a sheete of paper: my daughter tels vs all. 119  
*Claud.* Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty iest your daughter told vs of.\*  
*Leonato.* O, when she had writ it, and was reading it ouer, she found *Benedicke* and *Beatrice* betweene the sheete? 123  
*Claudio.* That!  
*Leon.* O, she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; raild at her self, that she should be so immodest to write to one that

\* 121. vs of] F. of vs Q.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

she knew would flout her: 'I meafure him,' faies ſhe, 'by my own ſpirit; for I ſhould flout him, if he writ to me: yea, though I loue him, I ſhould!' 129

*Clau.* Then, downe vpon her knees ſhe falls; weepes, fobs, beates her heart, teares her haire, prayes, curfes: 'O ſweet *Benedicke!* God giue me patience!' 132

*Leonato.* She doth indeed; my daughter faies ſo: and the extaſie hath ſo much ouerborne her, that my daughter is ſome-time afeard ſhee will doe a deſperate out-rage to her ſelfe: it is very true! 136

*Prince.* It were good that *Benedicke* knew of it by ſome other, if ſhe will not diſcouer it.

*Claudio.* To what end? He would make but a ſport of it, and torment the poore Lady worſe. 140

*Prince.* And he ſhould, it were an almes to hang him! Shees an excellent ſweete lady; and (out of all ſuſpition,) ſhe is vertuous!

*Claudio.* And ſhe is exceeding wiſe. 144

*Prince.* In euery thing but in louing *Benedicke.*

*Leonato.* O, my Lord! wiſedome and blood combating in ſo tender a body, we haue ten proofes to one, that bloud hath the victory. I am ſory for her, as I haue iuſt cauſe, beeing her vncl, and her gardian. 149

*Prince.* I would ſhee had beſtowed this dotage on mee! I would haue daſt all other reſpects, and made her halfe my ſelf. I pray you, tell *Benedicke* of it, and heare what a will ſay. 153

*Leonato.* Were it good, thinke you?

*Claudio.* *Hero* thinkes ſurely ſhe will die; for ſhe ſayes 'ſhee will die, if he loue her not; and ſhee will die ere ſhee make her loue knowne; and ſhe will die, if he wooe her, rather than ſhee will bate one breath of her accuſtomed croſneſſe.' 158

*Prince.* She doth well. If ſhee ſhoulde make tender of her loue, tis very poſſible heele ſcorne it; for the man (as you know all,) hath a contemptible ſpirite.

*Claudio.* He is a very proper man. 162

*Prince.* He hath, indeede, a good outward happines.

*Claudio.* Before God! and in my mind, very wiſe.

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139. *make but*] Q. but make F. 152. a] Q. he F.

161. *contemptible* = contemptuous.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Prince.* Hee dooth, indeede, shew some sparkes that are like wit. 166

*Claudio.* And I take him to be valiant.

*Prince.* As *Heſtor*, I assure you! And in the manning of quarrels, you may say he is wise; for either hee anoydes them with great discretion, or vndertakes them with a most Christianlike feare. 171

*Leonato.* If he do feare God, a must necessarily keep peace: if hee breake the peace, hee ought to enter into a quarrel with feare and trembling. 174

*Prince.* And so will hee doe; for the man doth feare God, howfoeuer it seemes not in him by some large iestes hee will make. Well, I am fory for your niece! Shall we goe seeke *Benedicke*, and tell him of her loue? 178

*Claudio.* Neuer tell him, my Lord! Let her weare it out with good counsell.

*Leonato.* Nay, thats impossible! Shee may weare her heart out firſt. 182

*Prince.* Well, we will heare further of it by your daughter: let it coole the while! I loue *Benedicke* wel; and I could wish he would modestly examine himſelfe, to see how much he is vnworthy ſo good a Lady. 186

*Leonato.* My Lord, will you walke? dinner is ready.

(*Claudio.* [*aside*] If he do not doate on her vpon this, I will neuer trust my expectation. 189

*Prince.* [*aside*] Let there be the same Nette spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sporte will be, when they holde one an opinion of an others dotage, and no such matter. Thats the Scene that I would see, which will be meerey a dumbe shew. Let vs fend her to call him in to dinner.) [*Exeunt.\** 195

*Benedicke.* [*coming forward*] This can be no tricke! the conference was sadly borne. They haue the truth of this from *Hero*! They seeme to pittie the Lady: it seemes her affections haue their full bent. 'Loue' me! why, it must be requited. I heare how I am cenſurde: they say 'I will beare [200

167. *Claudio*] Q. Leonato F | 186. *so*] to haue so F.  
(perhaps better, as Claudio is a | 195. *Exeunt*] F.  
fellow-soldier of *Benedicke*'s). | 199. *their*] Q. the F.

169. *say*] Q. see F.



*Much ado about Nothing.*

my selfe proudly, if I perceiue the loue come from her'; they say too, that 'she will rather die, than giue anie signe of affection.' I did neuer thinke to marry; I muft not feeme proud. Happy are they that heare their detractions, and can put them to mending! They say the Lady is 'faire'; (tis a trueth; I can beare them witnesse:) and 'vertuous'; (tis so, I cannot reprove it;) and 'wise, but for louing me'. By my troth, it is no [207 addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her follie; for I will be horribly in loue with her! I may chauce haue some odde quirkes and remnants of witte broken on me, because I haue railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loues the meate in his youth, that he cannot indure in his age. Shall quippes and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the carreere of his [214 humor? No, the world muft be peopled! When I saide 'I woulde die a batcheller,' I did not think I should liue til I were married. Here comes *Beatrice!* By this day, shees a faire lady! I doe spie some markes of loue in her! 218

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beatr.* Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

*Bene.* Faire *Beatrice!* I thanke you for your paines. 221

*Beat.* I tooke no more paines for those 'thankes', then you take paines to 'thanke' me. If it had bin painful, I would not haue come.

*Bene.* You take pleasure, then, in the message? 225

*Beat.* Yea, iust so much as you may take vpon a kniues point, and choake a daw withall. You haue no stomach, signior? Fare you well! [Exit. 228

*Bene.* Ha! 'Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner:' theres a double meaning in that! 'I took no more paines for those thanks then you took pains to thank me:' thats as much as to say, 'Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks.' If I do not take pittie of her, I am a villaine! if I do not loue her, I am a Jew! I will go get her picture. [Exit. 235

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Actus Tertius.\* Scena Secunda. [Usually III. i.]*

**LEONATOES Orchard.**

*Enter HERO, and two Gentlewomen, MARGARET, and VRSLEY.<sup>1</sup>*

*Hero.* Good *Margaret*, runne thee to the parlour! 1  
 There shalt thou find my cofin *Beatrice*,  
 Proposing with the prince and *Claudio* :  
 Whisper her eare; and tell her, I and *Vrsley*<sup>1</sup> 4  
 Walke in the orchard, and our whole discourse  
 Is all of her; say that thou ouer-heardst vs;  
 And bid her steale into the pleach'd bowere,  
 Where hony-suckles, ripened by the sunne, 8  
 Forbid the sunne to enter: (like fauourites,  
 Made proud by Princes, that aduance their pride,  
 Against that power that bred it :) there will she hide her,  
 To listen our propose. This is thy office, 12  
 Beare thee well in it, and leaue vs alone!

*Marg.* Ile make her come, I warrant you, presently. [*Exit.*]

*Hero.* Now, *Vrsula*! when *Beatrice* doth come,  
 As we do trace this alley vp and downe, 16  
 Our talke must onely be of *Benedicke*.  
 When I do name him, let it be thy part,  
 To praise him more than euer man did merite :  
 My talke to thee must be, how *Benedicke* 20  
 Is sicke in loue with *Beatrice*. Of this matter,  
 Is little *Cupids* crafty arrow made,  
 That onely wounds by heare-say. Now begin!

*Enter BEATRICE.*

For looke where *Beatrice*, like a Lapwing, runs 24  
 Close by the ground, to heare our conference.

[*B. hides in the Bower.*]

*Vrsula.* The pleasantfng angling is to see the fish  
 Cut with her golden ores the siluer streame,

\* *Actus Tertius*] F. *Gentle-*  
*women*] Q. Gentlemen F.

<sup>1</sup> *Vrsley*] Q. *Vrsula* F.

12. *Propose*] Q. purpose F (not-  
 III. ii. 1-27.]

withstanding the 'Proposing' of  
 line 3. Cp. Cotgrave's '*Propos...*  
 conference, chat').  
 23-4. *Enter*] F. after l. 25 in Q.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

And greedily denoure the treacherous baite : 28  
 So angle we for *Beatrice*, who euen now  
 Is couchèd in the wood-bine couerture.  
 Feare you not my part of the dialogue ! 31  
*Hero.* Then go we neare her, that her care loofe nothing  
 Of the falſe ſweete baite that we lay for it.  
[*They neare the Bower.*]  
 No, truly, *Vrfula*, ſhe is too diſdainfull !  
 I know her ſpirits are as coy and wild,  
 As Haggerds of the rocke.  
*Vrfula.* But are you ſure, 36  
 That *Benedicke* loues *Beatrice* ſo intirely ?  
*Hero.* So ſaies the Prince, and my new trothèd Lord.  
*Vrfula.* And did they bid you tel her of it, Madame ?  
*Hero.* They did intreate me to acquaint her of it ; 40  
 But I perſwaded them, if they lou'de *Benedicke*,  
 To with him wrattle with affection,  
 And neuer to let *Beatrice* know of it.  
*Vrfula.* Why did you ſo ? Dooth not the Gentleman 44  
 Deſerne as full as fortunate a bed,  
 As euer *Beatrice* ſhall couch vpon ?  
*Hero.* O God of loue ! I know he doth deſerne  
 As much as may be yeilded to a man : 48  
 But Nature neuer framde a womans hart,  
 Of powder ſtuffe then that of *Beatrice* :  
 Diſdaine and Scorne ride ſparkling in her eies,  
 Miſpriſing what they looke on ; and her wit 52  
 Valewes it ſelfe ſo highly, that to her  
 All matter els ſeemes weake : ſhe cannot lone,  
 Nor take no ſhape nor proiect of affection,  
 She is ſo ſelfe indeared.  
*Vrfula.* Sure, I thinke ſo ; 56  
 And therefore certainly it were not good  
 She knew his loue, leſt ſhe\* make ſport at it.  
*Hero.* Why, you ſpeake truth ! I neuer yet ſaw man,  
 How wiſe, how noble, yong, how rarely featured, 60  
 But ſhe would ſpel him backward : if faire-faced,  
 She would ſweare the gentleman ſhould be her fiſter ;

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\*58. *she*] F. ſheelee Q.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

If blacke, why, Nature, drawing of an antique, Made a foule blot; if tall, a launce ill-headed;	64
If low, an agot very vildly cut; If speaking, why, a vane blowne with all winds; If silent, why, a blocke mouëd with none!	
So turnes she euery man the wrong side out; And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that Which Simpleneffe and Merite purchafeth.	68
Vrfula. Sure, sure, such carping is not cõmmendable!	
Hero. No! not to be so odde, and from all fashions, As <i>Beatrice</i> is, cannot be cõmmendable.	72
But who dare tell her so? If I should speake, She would mocke me into ayre! O, she would laugh me Out of my selfe, presse me to death with wit!	76
Therefore let <i>Benedicke</i> , like couerd fire, Consume away in sighes, waste inwardly: It were a better death, then die with mockes, Which is as bad as die with tickling.	80
Vrfula. Yet tel her of it! heare what she wil say!	
Hero. No! rather I will go to <i>Benedicke</i> , And counsaile him to fight against his passion. And, truly, Ile deuise some honest flanders To staine my cofin with: one doth not know How much an ill word may impoison liking.	84
Vrfula. O, do not do your cofin such a wrong! She cannot be so much without true iudgement, (Having so swift and excellent a wit, As she is pride to haue,) as to refuse So rare a Gentleman as Signior <i>Benedicke</i> .	88
Hero. He is the onely man of <i>Italy</i> , Alwaies excepted my deare <i>Claudio</i> .	92
Vrfula. I pray you be not angry with me, Madame, Speaking my fancy: Signior <i>Benedicke</i> , For shape, for bearing, argument and valour, Goes formost in report through <i>Italy</i> .	96
Hero. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.	
Vrfula. His excellence did earne it, ere he had it. When are you married, Madame?	100

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Hero.* Why, every day: to morrow. Come, go in!  
He shew thee some attyres, and haue thy counsaile,  
Which is the best to furnishe me to-morrow.

*Vrsula.* [*aside.*] Shees lined, I warrant you! We haue  
caught her, Madame! 104

*Hero.* [*aside.*] If it proue so, then louing goes by haps:  
Some, *Cupid* kills with arrowes, some with traps! [*Exeunt.\**

*Beat.* [*coming forward.*] What fire is in mine eares? Can  
this be true?

Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorne so much? 108  
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adew!

No glory liues behind the backe of such. 110

¶ And, *Benedicke*, loue on! I will requite thee, 111  
Taming my wild heart to thy louing hand.

If thou dost loue, my kindnesse shall incite thee  
To bind our loues vp in a holy band; 114

For others say thou dost deserue; and I  
Beleene it better then reportingly! [*Exit.* 116

*Actus Tertius. Scena Tertia.* [*Usually III. ii.*]

*In LEONATOS House.*

*Enter PRINCE, CLAUDIO, BENEDICKE, and LEONATO.*

*Prince.* I doe but stay til your marriage be consummate,  
and then go I toward *Arragon.* 2

*Claud.* He bring you thither, my Lord, if youle vouchsafe  
me. 4

*Prince.* Nay, that would be as great a foyle in the new  
glosse of your marriage, as to shew a child his new coate, and  
forbid him to weare it! I wil only be bold with *Benedick*  
for his company; for, from the crowne of his head, to the [8  
sole of his foot, he is al mirth. He hath twice or thrice  
cut *Cupides* bow-string, and the little Hang-man dare not  
shoot at him: he hath a heart as found as a bell, and his  
tongue is the clapper; for what his heart thinkes, his tongue  
speakes. 13

101. *every day* = immediately,  
without delay.—Daniel. *N. Sh.*  
*Soc. Trans.* 1877-79, p. 145.

104. *lined*] Q. tane F.  
\* *Exeunt*] Exit F.

[III. ii. 101-116, iii. 1-13.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

- Bene.* Gallants, I am not as I haue bin! 14  
*Leo.* So say I! ¶ Me thinkes you are fadder.  
*Clau.* I hope he be in loue! 16  
*Prince.* Hang him, truant! theres no true drop of bloud in him, to be truly toucht with loue; if he be fadde, he wantes money.  
*Bene.* I haue the tooth-ach. 20  
*Prince.* Draw it!  
*Bene.* Hang it!  
*Clau.* You must 'hang' it first, and 'draw' it afterwards.  
*Prince.* What! figh for the tooth-ach? 24  
*Leon.* Where is but a humour, or a worme.  
*Bene.* Wel, euery one can master a grieffe, but he that has it!  
*Clau.* Yet say I, he is in loue! 28  
*Prince.* There is no appeerance of fancie in him, vnlesse it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises: as, to be a *Dutch-man* to day, a *French-man* to morrow, or in the shape of [31 two countries at once, as a *Germaine* from the waffe downward, all flops, and a *Spaniard* from the hip vpward, no dublet! Vnlesse he haue a fancie to this foolery, (as it appeares he hath,) he is no foole for fancy, as you would haue it appeare he is. 36  
*Clau.* If he be not in loue with some woman, there is no beleeuing old signes: a brushes his hat a mornings! what should that bode?  
*Prince.* Hath any man seene him at the Barbers? 40  
*Clau.* No! but the Barbers man hath bin seene with him; and the olde ornament of his cheeke hath already stufft tennis balls. 43  
*Leon.* Indeed, he lookes yonger than he did, by the loffe of a beard.  
*Prince.* Nay, a rubs himfelfe with Cinit! can you smell him out by that? 47  
[snatches B.'s handkerchief, & tosses it to CL.  
*Clau.* Thats as much as to say, the sweete youthe's in loue.  
*Prin.\** The greatestt note of it is his melancholy.  
*Clau.* And when was he woont to wash his face? 50

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26. can] Pope. cannot Q, F. 31-33. or . . . doublet] only in Q.  
\*49. Prin.] F. Bene. Q.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Prince.* Yea! or to paint himselfe? for the which, I heare what they say of him.

*Claud.* Nay, but his iesting spirit; which is now crept into a lute-string, and now governd by strops. 54

*Prince.* Indeed, that tells a heauy tale for him: conclude, conclude, he is in loue!

*Claud.* Nay, but I know who loues him. 57

*Prince.* That would I know too! I warrant, one that knows him not.

*Claud.* Yes, and his ill conditions; and in dispiight of al, dies for him! 61

*Prince.* She shall be buried with her face vpwards.

*Bene.* Yet is this no charme for the tooth-ake. [To LEO.] Old Signior, walke aside with me! I haue studied eight or nine wise wordes to speake to you, which these hobby-horses must not heare. [Exeunt BENEDICKE & LEONATO.]

*Prince.* For my life, to breake with him about *Beatrice*!

*Claud.* Tis euen so. *Hero* and *Margaret* haue by this played their parts with *Beatrice*; and then the two Beares will not bite one another when they meete. 70

*Enter IOHN the Bastard.*

*Bastard.* My Lord and Brother, God faue you!

*Prince.* Good den, Brother!

*Bastard.* If your leifure seru'd, I would speake with you.

*Prince.* In priuate? 74

*Bastard.* If it please you. Yet Count *Claudio* may heare; for what I would speake of, concernes him.

*Prince.* Whats the matter? 77

*Bast.* [to CLAUDIO] Meanes your Lordship to be married to morrow?

*Prince.* You know he does.

*Bast.* I know not that, when he knowes what I know. 81

*Claud.* If there be any impediment, I pray you discouer it!

*Bast.* You may think I loue you not: let that appeare hereafter, and ayme better at me by that I now will manifest. For my Brother, I thinke he holdes you well, and in [85

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56. conclude] Q. F om.

*Much adoe about Nothing*

deareneffe of heart hath holpe to effect your ensuing marriage:  
surely, sute ill spent, and labor ill bestowed! 87

*Prince.* Why, whats the matter?

*Bast.* I came hither to tel you; and, circumstances shortned,  
(for she has bin too long a talking of,) the Lady is disloyall.

*Claud.* Who? *Hero*? 91

*Bastar.* Euen she! *Leonatoes Hero!* your *Hero!* euery  
mans *Hero!*

*Claud.* 'Disloyall?' 94

*Bast.* The word is too good to paint out her wickednesse.  
I could say she were worse. Thinke you of a worse title,  
and I wil fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant! go  
but with me to night: you shall see her chamber window  
entred, euen the night before her wedding day! If you loue  
her then, to morow wed her: But it would better fitte your  
honour, to change your mind. 101

*Claud.* May this be so?

*Prince.* I wil not thinke it!

*Bast.* If you dare not trust that you see, confesse not that  
you knowe. If you will follow mee, I will shew you enough;  
and when you haue seene more, and heard more, procede  
accordingly! 107

*Claudio.* If I see anie thing to night, why I should not  
marry her to morrow; in the congregation, where I should  
wed, there will I shame her!

*Prince.* And, as I wooed for thee to obtaine her, I wil  
ioyne with thee to disgrace her. 112

*Bastard.* I will disparage her no farther, till you are my  
witnesses. Beare it coldely but till midnight, and let the issue  
shew it selfe! 115

*Prince.* O day vntowardly turned!

*Claud.* O mischiefe frangely thwarting!

*Bastard.* O plague right well preuented! so will you say,  
when you haue seene the sequele. [*Exeunt.\**] 119

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\*119. *Exeunt*] Exit F.



*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Actus Tertius. Scena Quarta. [Usually III. iii.]*

*A Street in Messina.*

*Enter DOGBERY and his compartner VERGES, with the Watch.*

*Dog.* [*to the Watch*] Are you good men and true?

*Verges.* Yea! or else it were pittie but they should suffer saluation, body and soule. 3

*Dog.* Nay! that were a punishment too good for them, if they should haue any alleageance in them, being chofen for the Princes Watch. 6

*Verges.* Well, giue them their charge, neighbour *Dogbery!*  
*Dogbery.* First: who thinke you the most defartlesse man to be Constable?

*Watch 1.* *Hugh Ote-cake*, fir, or *George Sea-cole*; for they can write and reade. 11

*Dogbery.* Come hither, neighbor *Sea-cole!* God hath blest you with a good name: to be a welfauoured man, is the gift of Fortune; but to write and reade, comes by Nature.

*Watch 2.* [*SEA-COLE*] Both which, Maister Constable, . . . 15

*Dogbery.* You haue: I knew it would be your answer. Wel, for your fauour, fir; why, giue God thanks, and make no boast of it! and for your writing and reading, let that appeere when there is no neede of such vanity! You are thought heere to be the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the Watch: therefore beare you the lanthorne! This is your charge: 'You shall comprehend all vagrom men. You are to bidde any man stand, in the Princes name.'

*Watch 2.* How if a will not stand? 24

*Dogbery.* Why, then take no note of him, but let him goe; and presently call the rest of the Watch together, and thanke God you are ridde of a knaue!

*Verges.* If he wil not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Princes subiects. 29

*Dogbery.* True! and they are to meddle with none but the Princes subiects. ¶ 'You shall also make no noife in the

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9. *Constable*: t. i. of the Watch (see l. 21).

*Much ado about Nothing.*

streetes;’ for, for the Watch to babble and to talke, is most tollerable, and not to be indured! 33

*Watch 2.* We will rather sleepe than talke: we know what belongs to a Watch.

*Dogbery.* Why, you speake like an antient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: onely, haue a care that your billes bee not stolne. Well, ‘you are to cal at al the alehouses; and bid those that are drunke, get them to bed.’ 40

*Watch 2.* How if they will not?

*Dogbery.* Why, then let them alone til they are sober: if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, ‘they are not the men you tooke them for.’ 44

*Watch 2.* Well, fir!

*Dogbery.* ‘If you meete a thiefe, you may suspect him, by vertue of your office, to be no true man:’ and for such kind of men, the lesse you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty. 49

*Watch 2.* If we know him to be a thiefe, shal we not lay hands on him?

*Dogbery.* Truly, by your office you may; but I thinke ‘they that touch pitch will be defilde’: the most peaceable way for you, if you doe take a thiefe, is, to let him shew himselfe what he is, and steale out of your companie. 55

*Verges.* You haue bene alwayes called a mercifull manne, partner.

*Dog.* Truly, I would not hang a dogge by my will, much more a man who hath anie honestie in him! 59

*Verges.* ‘If you heare a child crie in the night, you must call to the nurse, and bid her still it.’

*Watch 2.* How if the nurse be asleepe, and will not heare vs? 63

*Dog.* Why, then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not heare her Lamb when it baes, will neuer answer a calfe when he bleates.

*Verges.* Tis very true! 67

*Dog.* This is the end of the charge: ‘you, Constable, are to

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32. *to talke*] Q. talke F. 34, &c. *Watch 2.* (as he’s their Constable).

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

present the Princes owne perfon: if you meete the Prince in the night, you may stay him.

*Verges.* Nay, birlady, that I thinke a cannot! 71

*Dog.* Fine shillings to one on't, with any man that knowes the statues, he may stay him! Mary, not without the Prince be willing; for, indeed, the Watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will. 75

*Verges.* Birlady, I thinke it be so!

*Dog.* Ha, ah, ha! ¶ Wel, masters, good night! and there be any matter of weight chaunces, cal vp me! keepe your fellowes counfailes, and your owne; and good night! ¶ Come, neighbour! [Going, 80

*Watch 2.* Well, masters, we heare our charge. Let vs goe fitte here vpon the church bench till twoo, and then all to bed! [Dog. & V. come back. 83

*Dog.* One word more, honest neighbors! I pray you watch about signior *Leonatoes* doore; for the wedding being there to morrow, there is a great coyle to night. Adiew! be vigitant, I befeech you. [Exeunt DOGBERRY & VERGES.

*Enter BORACHIO, cupshotten, and CONRADE.*

*Bor.* What! *Conrade*? 88

*Watch 2.* [*aside*] Peace! fir not!

*Bor.* *Conrade*, I say!

*Con.* Here, man! I am at thy elbow. 91

*Bor.* Mas, and my elbow itcht: I thought there would a scabbe follow.

*Con.* I will owe thee an answer for that: and now, forward with thy tale! 95

*Bor.* Stand thee close, then, vnder this penthouse, for it driffells raine; and I will, like a true drunckard, vtter all to thee. 98

*Watch 2.* [*aside.*] Some treason, masters! yet stand close!

*Bor.* Therefore know, I haue earned of Don\* *John* a thousand Ducates.

*Con.* Is it possible that any villanie should be so deare? 102

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73. statues] F. Statutes Q (F. | 89. *Aside*] Rowe.  
more like Dogbery's blundering). | \*100. Don] F. Dun Q.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Bor.* Thou shouldst rather aske if it were possible any villanie should be so 'rich'? for when rich villains haue need of poor ones, poore ones may make what price they will.

*Con.* I wonder at it! 106

*Bor.* That shewes thou art vnconfirm'd. Thou knowest that the fashjon of a dublet, or a hat, or a cloake, is nothing to a man.

*Con.* Yes, it is apparell. 110

*Bor.* I meane, the fashjon.

*Con.* Yes, 'the fashjon' is the Fashion.

*Bor.* Tush, I may as well say 'the foole's the foole!' But seeest thou not what a deformed theefe this Fashion is? 114

*Watch 1.* [*aside*] I know that 'Deformed'! a has bin a vile theefe this vij. yeere! a goes vp and downe like a gentle man: I remember his name.

*Bor.* Didst thou not heare some body? 118

*Con.* No! twas the vane on the house.

*Bor.* Seeest thou not (I say) 'what a deformed thiefe this Fashion is'? how giddily a turnes about all the Hot-blounds between foureteene and five-and-thirtie? sometimes fashioning them like *Pharaoes* souldiours in the rechie painting; sometime like god *Bels* priests in the old church-window; sometime like the shauen *Hercules* in the smircht worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-peece seemes as massie as his club. 127

*Con.* Al this I see; and I see that the Fashion weares out more apparrell then the man. But art not thou thy selfe giddy with the Fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the Fashion? 131

*Bor.* Not so, neither: but know that I haue to night wooed *Margaret*, the Lady *Heroes* gentle-woman, by the name of *Hero*: she leanes me out at her mistris chamber window, bids me a thousand times good night. . . I tell this tale vildly: I should first tel thee how the Princc, *Claudio*, and my master, planted, and placed, and possessed, by my master *Don Iohn*, saw a farre off in the orchard this amiable encounter. 139

*Conr.* And thought they *Margaret* was *Hero*?

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140. *they*] Q. thy F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Bor.\** Two of them did, the Prince and *Claudio*; but the diuel my matter knew she was *Margaret*; and partly by his oths, which first posselt them; partly by the darke night, which did deceiue them; but chiefly, by my villany, which did confirme any slander that *Don Iohn* had made, away went *Claudio* enragde; swore he would meet her, (as he was apointed,) next morning at the Temple; and there, before the whole congregation, fhame her with what he saw o're night, and send her home againe without a husband. 149

*Watch 1.* We charge you in the Princes name, Stand!

*Watch 2.* Call vppe the right maister Constable! Wee haue here recouerd the most dangerous peece of lechery, that euer was knowne in the Common wealth! 153

*Watch 1.* And one 'Deformed' is one of them; I know him! a weares a locke.

*Conr.* Masters, masters! . . .

*Watch 2.* Youle be made bring 'Deformed' forth, I warrant you. 158

*Conr.* Masters! . . .

*Watch 1.* Neuer speake! we charge you, let vs obey you to go with vs! 161

*Bor.* We are like to proue a goodly commoditie, being taken vp of these mens billes.

*Conr.* A 'commodity' in question, I warrant you. ¶ Come! weele obey you! [Exeunt. 165]

*Actus Quartus. Scena Prima. [Usually III. iv.]*

**HEROES Chamber.**

*Enter HERO, and MARGARET, and VRSULA.*

*Hero.* Good *Vrsula*! wake my cofin *Beatrice*, and desire her to rise!

*Vrsula.* I wil, Lady.

*Hero.* And bid her come hither!

*Vrsula.* Well. 4

*Marg.* Troth, I thinke your other rebato were better. [Exit.]

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\*141. *Bor*] F. Bar. Q.

159. *Masters . . .*] Theobald *Masters*, neuer, Q, F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Hero.* No, pray thee, good *Meg*, ile weare this. 7

*Marg.* By my troth, 's not so good, and I warrant your Cofin will fay fo.

*Hero.* My Cofin's a foole, and thou art another! ile weare none but this! 11

*Mar.* I like the new tire within, excelently, if the haire were a thought browner; and your gown's a most rare fashion, yfaith! I saw the Dutcheffe of *Millaines* gowne that they praise fo. 15

*Hero.* O, that exceeds, they fay.

*Marg.* By my troth, 's but a night-gown in\* respect of yours! cloth a gold, and cuts, and lac'd with filuer, fet with pearles, downe sleeues, side sleeues, and skirts, round vnderborne with a blewifh tinfell: but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excelent fashion, yours is worth ten on't! 21

*Hero.* God giue me ioy to weare it! for my heart is exceeding heauy.

*Marg.* T'will be heauier soone, by the weight of a man.

*Hero.* Fie vpon thee! art not ashamed? 25

*Marg.* Of what, Lady? of speaking honourably? Is not 'marriage honourable' in a beggar? Is not your Lord honourable without mariage? I thinke you would haue me fay, 'sauing your reuerence, a husband': &<sup>1</sup> bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, ile offend no body. Is there any harm, in the 'heauier for a husband'? None, I thinke, and it be the right husband, and the right wife; otherwise tis light, and not heauy: aske my Lady *Beatrice* els: here she comes! 34

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Hero.* Good morrow, Coze!

*Beat.* Good morrow, sweete *Hero*!

*Hero.* Why, how now? do you speake in the ficke tune?

*Beat.* I am out of all other tune, me thinkes. 38

*Mar.* Clap's into '*Light a loue*': (that goes without a burden :) do you sing it, and ile daunce it!

*Beat.* Ye, *Light a loue*, with your heels! then, if your

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7, 10, 16, 22. *Hero*] Q. Bero F. | 41. *Ye*] Q, F. Yes, Rowe; Yea  
17. *in*] F. it Q. | Stevens (Capell conj.).  
<sup>1</sup> & = and = if.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

husband haue stables enough, youle see he shall lacke no barnes. 43

*Mar.* O illegitimate construction! I scorne that with my heeles!

*Beat.* Tis almost fine a clocke, Cofin: tis time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill: hey ho! 47

*Mar.* For a hauke, a horse, or a husband?

*Beat.* For the letter that begins them al, H.

*Mar.* Wel, and you be not turnde *Turke*, theres no more sayling by the starre. 51

*Beat.* What meanes the foole, trow?

*Mar.* Nothing, I. But God fend euery one their hearts desire! 54

*Hero.* [*to BEAT.*] These gloues the Counte sent me; they are an excellent perfume.

*Beat.* I am stuft, Cofin; I cannot smell! 57

*Mar.* A maide, and 'stuft'! theres goodly catching of colde!

*Beat.* O, God help me, God help me! how long haue you profest apprehension? 60

*Mar.* Euer since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely?

*Beat.* It is not seene enough; you should weare it in your cap. By my troth, I am sicke! 64

*Mar.* Get you some of this distill'd *carduus benedictus*, and lay it to your heart: it is the onely thing for a qualme.

*Hero.* There thou prickst her with a thiffel.

*Beat.* '*Benedictus*'! why '*benedictus*'? you haue some moral in this *benedictus*. 69

*Mar.* 'Morall'? no, by my troth, I haue no 'morall' meaning; I meant, plaine holy-thiffel. You may thinke, perchaunce, that I think you are in loue. Nay, birlady, I am not such a foole to think what I list; nor I list not to thinke what I can; nor, indeed, I can not think, (if I would thinke my heart out of thinking,) that you are in loue, or that you will be in loue, or that you can be in loue. Yet *Benedicke* was such another; and now is he become a man. He swore he would neuer marry; and yet now, in dispight of his heart, he eates his meate without grudging. And how you may be conuerted,

*Much ado about Nothing.*

I know not; but me thinkes you looke with your eies, as  
other women do. 81

*Beat.* What pace is this that thy tongue keepes?

*Marg.* Not a false gallop.

*Re-enter* URSULA.

*Vrsula.* Madame, withdraw! the Prince, the Count,  
signior *Benedicke*, Don *Iohn*, and all the gallants of the  
towne, are come to fetch you to church. 86

*Hero.* Help to dresse me, good Coze, good *Meg*, good  
*Vrsula!* [*Exeunt.*]

*Actus Quartus. Scena Secunda. [Usually iii. V.]*

*In* LEONATOES House.

*Enter* LEONATO, and the Constable (*DOGBERY*), and the  
Headborough (*VERGES*).

*Leonato.* What would you with me, honest neighbour?

*Const. Dog.* Mary, fir, I would haue some confidence with  
you, that decernes you nearely. 3

*Leonato.* Briefe, I pray you! for you see it is a busie time  
with me.

*Const. Dog.* Mary, this it is, fir. . .

*Headb.* Yes, in truth it is, fir. 7

*Leonato.* What is it, my good friends?

*Con. Do.* Goodman *Verges*, fir, speaks a little off the  
matter: an old man, fir, and his wittes are not so blunt, as,  
God helpe, I would desire they were; but in faith, honest, as  
the skin between his browes! 12

*Head.* Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man liuing,  
that is an old man, and no honefter then I.

*Const. Dog.* 'Comparifons are odorous'; *palabras!*<sup>1</sup> neigh-  
bour *Verges*. 16

*Leonato.* Neighbors, you are tedious.

*Const. Dog.* It pleases your worship to say so, but we are  
the poore Dukes officers; but truly, for mine owne part, if I

9. *off*] Stevens. of Q, F.

<sup>1</sup> Span. *Palabras*, words.



*Much ado about Nothing.*

were as tedious as a King, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship. 21

*Leonato.* Al thy tediousnesse on me! ah!

*Const. Dog.* Yea, and 't twere a thousand pound more than tis; for I heare as good exclamation on your Worshipp, as of any man in the Citie; and though I be but a poore man, I am glad to heare it! 26

*Head.* And so am I!

*Leonato.* I would faine know what you haue to say.

*Head.* Mary, fir, our watch to night, (excepting your worships presence,) ha tane a couple of as arrant knaues as any in *Messina*. 31

*Const. Dog.* A good old man, fir! he will be talking: as they say, 'When the age is in, the wit is out.' God help vs! it is a world to see! ¶ Well said, yfaith, neighbour *Verges*! Well! 'God's a good man!' 'And two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind.' ¶ An honest foule, yfaith, fir! by my troth he is, as euer broke bread. But God is to be worshipt: all men are not alike! ¶ Alas, good neighbour! 38

*Leonato.* Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

*Const. Do.* Gifts! that God giues!

*Leonato.* I must leaue you. 41

*Const. Dog.* One word, fir! Our Watch, fir, haue indeede comprehended two aspitious persons; and wee would haue them this morning examined before your Worshipp. 44

*Leonato.* Take their examination your selfe, and bring it me! I am now in great haste, as it may appeare vnto you.

*Constable.* It shall be suffigance. 47

*Leonato.* Drinke some wine ere you goe: fare you well

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Messenger.* My lord! they stay for you, to giue your daughter to her husband.

*Leon.* Ile wait vpon them. I am ready. 51

[*Exeunt LEONATO & Messenger.*

*Dogb.* Go, good partner! goe get you to *Francis Sea-cole*!

23. pound] Q. times F.

<sup>1</sup> God's a good Man. *Lusty Juuents* (ab. 1550). *Hazlitt's Dodsley*, ii. 73.

46. ii] Q. F om.

51-2. *Exeunt*] Exit Q, F, after l. 48.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

bid him bring his penne and inckehorne to the Gaole: we are now to examination these men.

*Verges.* And we must do it wisely. 55

*Dogbery.* We will spare for no witte, I warrant you: heeres that [*taps his forehead*] shall driue some of them to a noncome! Only get the learned writer to set downe our excommunication, and meet me at the Iaile! [*Exeunt.\** 59

*Actus Quartus.† Scena Tertia. [Usually IV. I.]*

*Enter PRINCE, BASTARD, LEONATO, FRIER FRANCIS, CLAUDIO, BENEDICKE, HERO, and BEATRICE.*

*Leonato.* Come, *Frier Francis*, be briefe! onely to the plaine forme of marriage, and you shall recount their particular dueties afterwards.

*Fran.* You come hither, my Lord, to marry this Lady? 4

*Claudio.* No!

*Leo.* To bee married to her: *Frier*, you come to marry her.

*Frier.* Lady, you come hither to be married to this Counte?

*Hero.* I do. 8

*Frier.* If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conioyned, I charge you on your soules, to vtter it.

*Claudio.* Know you any, *Hero*? 12

*Hero.* None, my Lord!

*Frier.* Know you any, Counte?

*Leonato.* I dare make his answer, None! 15

*Clau.* O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do!

*Bene.* Howe nowe! interiections? Why, then; some be of laughing, as, ah, ha, he! 19

*Claudio.* Stand thee by, *Frier*! [*To LEON.*] Father, by your leaue,

Will you with free and vnconstrained soule

Giue me this maide, your daughter? 22

54. *examination*] Q. examine |

F. \*59. *Exeunt*] F.

IV. ii. 53-59; iii. 1-22.]

†*Actus Quartus*] F. |  
17. *not . . . do*] Q. F om.  
19. *ah*] Q. ha F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

- Leonato.* As freely, sonne, as God did giue her mee. 23  
*Claudio.* And what haue I to giue you backe, whose worth  
May counterpoise this rich and pretious gift?  
*Prince.* Nothing, vnlesse you render her againe. 26  
*Claudio.* Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulness.  
¶ There, *Leonato!* take her backe againe!  
Giue not this rotten Orengge to your friend!  
Shee's but the signe and semblance of her honor. 30  
Behold, how like a maide she blushes heere!  
O, what authoritie and shew of truth,  
Can cunning sinne couer it selfe withall!  
Comes not that blood, as modest euidence, 34  
To witnesse simple Vertue? would you not sweare,  
All you that see her, that she were a maide,  
By these exterior shewes? But she is none!  
She knowes the heate of a luxurious bed: 38  
Her blush is guiltinesse, not modestie!  
*Leonato.* What do you meane, my Lord?  
*Claudio.* Not to be married,  
Not to knit my soule, to an approoued wanton!  
*Leonato.* Deere my Lord! if you, in your owne prooffe, 42  
Haue vanquisht the resistance of her youth,  
And made defeate of her virginie, . . .  
*Claudio.* I know what you would say: if I haue knowne  
her,  
You will say, she did imbrace me as a husband, 46  
And so extenuate the forehand sinne:  
No, *Leonato!*  
I neuer tempted her with word too large;  
But, as a brother to his sifter, shewed 50  
Bashfull sinceritie, and comelie loue.  
*Hero.* And seemde I euer otherwise to you?  
*Claudio.* Out on thee! Seeming! I wil write against it,  
'You seeme to me as *Diane* in her Orbe, 54  
As chaste as is the budde ere it be blowne;  
But you are more intemperate in your blood,  
Than *Venus*, or those pampred animalls  
That rage in sauage sensualitye.' 58

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23. *Leonato*] Leonata Q. Leon F. 26. *Prince*] Princn Q. Prin. F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Hero.* Is my Lord well, that he doth speake so wide?  
*Leonato.* Sweete Prince! why speake not you?  
*Prince.* What should I speake?  
 I stand dishonour'd, that haue gone about,  
 To lincke my deare friend to a common stale. 62  
*Leonato.* Are these things spoken, or do I but dreame?  
*Bastard.* Sir, they are spoken; and these things are true!  
*Bened.* This lookes not like a nuptiall.  
*Hero.* True, O God!  
*Claud.* *Leonato*, stand I here? 66  
 Is this the Prince? is this the Princes Brother?  
 Is this face *Heroes*? are our eies our owne?  
*Leonato.* All this is so: but what of this, my Lord? 69  
*Claud.* Let me but moue one question to your daughter;  
 And, by that fatherly and kindly power  
 That you haue in her, bid her answer truly!  
*Leonato.* [to H.] I charge thee do so, as thou art my child!  
*Hero.* O God defend me! how am I befet! 74  
 ¶ What kind of catechising call you this?  
*Claud.* To make you answer truly to your name  
*Hero.* Is it not *Hero*? Who can blot that name  
 With any iust reproch?  
*Claud.* Mary, that can *Hero*! 78  
*Hero* it selfe can blot out *Heroes* vertue.  
 What man was he, talkt with you yesternight,  
 Out at your window, betwixt twelue and one?  
 Now, if you are a Maide, answer to this! 82  
*Hero.* I talkt with no man at that hower, my Lord.  
*Prince.* Why, then are you no Maiden! ¶ *Leonato*,  
 I am fory you must heare: Vpon mine honor,  
 My selfe, my Brother, and this griened Counte, 86  
 Did see her, heare her, at that howre last night,  
 Talke with a ruffian at her chamber-window;  
 Who hath indeede, most like a liberall villaine,  
 Confest the vile encounters they haue had 90  
 A thousand times in secret.  
*Iohn.* Fie! fie! they are not to be named, my Lord,  
 Not to be spoke of:

73. so] Q. F om.

93. spoke] Q. spoken F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

There is not chaffitie enough in language, 94  
 Without offence to vtter them! ¶ Thus, pretty Lady,  
 I am fory for thy much misgouernement.  
*Claud.* O *Hero*! what a *Hero* hadst thou bin,  
 If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed 98  
 About thy thoughts, and counfailes of thy heart!  
 But fare thee well, most foule, most faire! Farewell,  
 Thou pure impietie, and impious puritie!  
 For thee ile locke vp all the gates of Loue, 102  
 And on my eie-liddes shall Coniecture hang,  
 To turne all Beautie into thoughts of harme;  
 And neuer shall it more be gracious!  
*Leonato.* Hath no mans dagger here a point for me? 106  
 [*HERO swounds. BEAT. catches her.*  
*Beatrice.* Why, how now, Cofin! wherfore sinke you down?  
*Bastard.* Come, let vs go! these things, come thus to light,  
 Smother her spirits vp.  
 [*Exeunt the PRINCE, DON IOHN, & CLAUDIO.*  
*Benedicke.* [*to BEAT.*] How doth the Lady?  
*Beatrice.* Dead, I thinke! ¶ Help, vncke! 110  
 ¶ *Hero*! why, *Hero*! ¶ *Vncke*! ¶ *Signior Benedicke*! ¶ *Frier*!  
*Leonato.* O Fate! take not away thy heauy hand  
 Death is the fairest couer for her shame  
 That may be wisht for.  
*Beatrice.* How now, cofin *Hero*? 114  
*Frier.* Haue comfort, Lady!  
*Leonato.* Dost thou looke vp?  
*Frier.* Yea, wherfore should she not?  
*Leonato.* 'Wherfore?' Why, doth not euery earthly thing  
 Cry shame vpon her? Could she here deny 118  
 The story that is printed in her bloud?  
 ¶ Do not liue, *Hero*! do not ope thine eies!  
 For, did I thinke thou wouldst not quickly die,  
 Thought I thy spirites were stronger than thy shames, 122  
 My selfe would, on the rereward of reproches,  
 Strike at thy life! Griued I, I had but one?  
 Chid I for that, at frugall Natures frame?  
 O! one too much by thee! Why had I one? 126

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123. rereward] Q. reward F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

Why euer wast thou louely in my eies?  
 Why had I not, with charitable hand,  
 Tooke vp a beggars issue at my gates,  
 Who, smirch'd thus, and mired with infamy, 130  
 I might haue said, 'No part of it is mine;  
 This shame deriues it selfe from vnknowne loynes'  
 But mine! and mine I loued! and mine I praifde!  
 And mine that I was proud on! mine so much, 134  
 That I my selfe, was to my selfe not mine,  
 Valewing of her!—Why, She! O! she is falne  
 Into a pit of incke, that the wide sea  
 Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe, 138  
 And salt too little, which may season giue  
 To her foule tainted flesh!

*Ben.* Sir, sir! be patient!  
 For my part, I am so attired in wonder,  
 I know not what to say. 142

*Beat.* O! on my soule! my cofin is belied!  
*Bene.* Lady! were you her bedfellow last night?  
*Beat.* No truly, not; although, vntill last night,  
 I haue this tweluemonth bin her bedfellow. 146

*Leon.* Confirmd! confirmd! O! that is stronger made,  
 Which was before bard vp with ribs of yron!  
 Would the two Princes lie? and *Claudio* lie,  
 Who loued her so, that, speaking of her fouleneffe, 150  
 Washt it with teares? Hence from her! let her die!

*Frier.* Heare me a little!  
 For I haue only bin silent so long,  
 & giuen way vnto this course of fortune, 154  
 By noting of the Lady. I haue markt  
 A thousand blushing apparitions  
 To start into her face, a thousand innocent flames,  
 (In angel whiteneffe,) beate away those blufhes; 158  
 And in her eie, there hath appeared a fire,  
 To burne the errors that these Princes hold  
 Against her maiden truth. Call me a foole;  
 Truft not my reading, nor my obseruations, 162  
 Which with experimental feale doth warrant

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130. *smirched*] Q. smeered F.

158. *beate*] Q. beare F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

The tenure of my booke ; trust not my age,  
 My reuerence, calling, nor diuinitie,  
 If this sweete Ladie lie not guiltlesse here, 166  
 Vnder some biting errour!

*Leonato.* Frier, it cannot be!  
 Thou seeft that al the grace that she hath left,  
 Is, that she will not adde to her damnation  
 A sinne of periury : she not denies it! 170  
 Why seekest thou then, to couer with excuse,  
 That which appears in proper nakednesse ?

*Frier.* Lady ! what man is he you are accusde of ?

*Hero.* They know that do accuse me. I know none ! 174  
 If I know more of any man alie

Then that which maiden modesty doth warrant,  
 Let all my sinnes lacke mercie ! [*To LEON.*] O my Father !  
 Proue you that any man with me conuerft 178  
 At houres vnmeeete, or that I yesternight  
 Maintained the change of words with any creature,  
 Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death !

*Frier.* There is some strange misprision in the Princes. 182

*Bene.* Two of them haue the very bent of honour ;  
 And if their wisedomes be misled in this,  
 The practise of it liues in *Iohn* the Bastard,  
 Whose spirites toyle in frame of villanies. 186

*Leonato.* I know not. If they speake but truth of her,  
 These hands shall teare her ! If they wrong her honour,  
 The proudest of them shall wel heare of it !  
 Time hath not yet so dried this bloud of mine, 190  
 Nor Age so eate vp my inuention,  
 Nor Fortune made such hauocke of my meanes,  
 Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,  
 But they shall find, awakte in such a kind, 194  
 Both strength of limbe, and policy of mind,  
 Ability in meanes, and choise of friends,  
 To quit me of them throughly !

*Frier.* Pawse awhile,  
 And let my counsell sway you in this case ! 198  
 Your Daughter here, the Princes left for dead :

164. *tenure* = tenour.

199. *Princes* &c.] Theobald. *princesse* (left for dead) Q, F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

Let her awhile be secretly kept in,  
And publish it, that she is dead indeede ;  
Maintaine a mourning ostentation, 202  
And on your families old monument,  
Hang mourneful epitaphes, and do all rites  
That appertaine vnto a buriall.

*Leon.* What shall become of this? what will this do? 206

*Frier.* Mary, this well caried, shall, on her behalfe,  
Change flaunder to remorse : that is some good :  
But not for that, dreame I on this strange course,  
But on this trauaile looke for greater birth, 210  
She dying, (as it must be so maintaind,)  
Vpon the instant that she was accusde,  
Shall be lamented, pittied, and excusde 213  
Of euery hearer : for it so falls out,

That what we haue, we prize not to the worth  
Whiles we enioy it ; but being lackt and lost,  
Why, then we racke the valew, then we find 217  
The vertue that possession would not shew vs  
Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with *Claudio* :

When hee shall heare she died vpon his words,  
Th'Idæa of her life shall sweetly creepe 221  
Into his study of imagination,

And euery louely Organ of her life  
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habite,  
More moouing, delicate, and full of life, 225

Into the eie and prospect of his soule,  
Then when she liude indeed. Then shall he mourne,  
If euer Loue had interest in his liuer,  
And wish he had not so accus'd her ; 229

No, though he thought his accusation true !  
Let this be so ; and doubt not but successe  
Will fashion the euent in better shape  
Then I can lay it downe in likelihood. 233

But if all ayme but this be leuell'd false,  
The supposition of the Ladies death  
Will quench the wonder of her infamie.  
And if it fort not wel, you may conceale her, 237  
As best befits her wounded reputation,  
In some reclusiue and religious life,



*Much adoe about Nothing.*

Out of all eies, tongues, minds, and iniuries.

*Bene.* Signior *Leonato*! let the Frier aduise you! 241  
And though you know my inwardnesse and loue  
Is very much vnto the Prince and *Claudio*,  
Yet, by mine honor, I will deale in this,  
As secretly and iuffly as your foule 245  
Should with your body!

*Leon.* Being that I flow in grieffe,  
The smallest twine may leade me.

*Frier.* Tis wel contented: presently away!  
For, to frange fores, frangely they fraine the cure. 249  
¶ Come, Lady! die to liue! this wedding day  
Perhaps is but prolong'd. Haue patience and endure!

[*Exeunt all but BENEDICKE and BEATRICE.*

*Bene.* Lady *Beatrice*! haue you wept al this while?

*Beat.* Yea! and I will weep a while longer. 253

*Bene.* I will not desire that.

*Beat.* You haue no reason. I do it freely.

*Bene.* Surely I do beleue your faire cofin is wronged.

*Beat.* Ah! how much might the man deserue of me that  
would right her! 258

*Bene.* Is there any way to shew such friendship?

*Beat.* A very euen way, but no such friend.

*Bene.* May a Man do it? 261

*Beat.* It is a Mans office, but not yours.

*Bene.* I doe loue nothing in the worlde so well as you! is  
not that frange? 264

*Beat.* As frange as the thing I knowe not. It were as  
possible for me to say, 'I loued nothing so wel as you': but  
beleue me not; and yet I lie not: I confesse nothing, nor I  
deny nothing. I am fory for my cofin. 268

*Bened.* By my fword, *Beatrice*, thou louest me!

*Beat.* Do not sweare by it,† and eat it.

*Bened.* I will sweare by it that you loue me; and I wil  
make him eate it, that sayes I loue not you. 272

*Beat.* Will you not eate your word?

*Bened.* With no sawce that can be deuised to it! I protest  
I loue thee!

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\*251. *Exeunt &c.*] exit Q, F. 270. *sweare by it*] F. sweare Q.  
53 [IV. iii. 240-275.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

- Beat.* Why then, God forgiue me! 276  
*Bened.* VVhat offence, sweete *Beatrice* ?  
*Beat.* You haue stayed me in a happy houre. I was about  
to protest I loued you.  
*Bened.* And do it, with all thy heart! 280  
*Beat.* I lone you with so much of my heart, that none is  
left to protest.  
*Bened.* Come! bid me doe any thing for thee!  
*Beat.* Kill *Claudio*! 284  
*Bened.* Ha! not for the wide world!  
*Beat.* You kill me to deny it. Farewell! [*Turns to go.*  
*Bened.* Tarry, sweete *Beatrice*! [*He holds her.* 287  
*Beat.* I am gone, though I am here. There is no lone in  
you! Nay, I pray you let me go!  
*Bened.* *Beatrice*! [*She struggles with him.*  
*Beat.* In faith, I will go. 291  
*Bened.* VVeele be friends first.  
*Beat.* You dare easier be friends with mee, than fight with  
mine enemy.  
*Bened.* Is *Claudio* thine enemy? 295  
*Beat.* Is a not approued in the height a villaine, that hath  
flaundered, scorned, dishonored my kinfwoman? O that I  
were a man! What! beare her in hand, vntill they come to  
take handes; and then, with publike accusation, vnouer'd  
flaunder, vnmittigated rancour! . . . O God, that I were a  
man! I woulde eate his heart in the market place! 301  
*Bened.* Heare me, *Beatrice*! . . .  
*Beat.* 'Talke with a man out at a window!' A proper  
faying!  
*Bened.* Nay, but *Beatrice* . . . 305  
*Beat.* Sweete *Hero*! she is wrongd! she is flaundred!  
shee is vndone!  
*Bened.* *Beat* . . . 308  
*Beat.* Princes and Counties! surely a Princely testimonie,  
a goodly Counte! Counte Comfect! a sweete Gallant, surely!  
O that I were a Man for his fake! or that I had any friend  
woulde be a Man for my fake! But Manhoode is melted  
into curfies, Valour into complement, and Men are only

*Much ado about Nothing.*

turn'd into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as *Hercules*, that only tels a lie, and sweares it! I cannot be a Man with wishing; therefore I will die a Woman with grieuing! [Turns to go. 317

*Bened.* Tarry, good *Beatrice*! By this hand, I loue thee!

*Beatrice.* Vse it for my loue some other way than swearing by it. 320

*Bened.* Thinke you in your foule, the Count *Claudio* hath wrongd *Hero*?

*Beatrice.* Yea! as sure as I haue a thought, or a foule! 323

*Bened.* Enough! I am engagde! I will challenge him! I will kisse your hand; and so I leaue you. By this hand, [kissing & holding it] *Claudio* shal render me a deere account! As you heare of me, so think of me! Goe comforte your Cooftin! I must fay she is dead; and so, farewell! [Exeunt. 328

*Actus Quartus. Scena Quarta. [Usually IV. ii.]*

*Enter the Constables (KEMP as DOGBERY, & COWLEY as VERGES) and the Towne clearke (FRANCIS SEA-COLE, the Sexton) in gounes; & the Watch with BORACHIO\* and CONRADE.*

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* Is our whole diffembly appeard?

*Cowley. (VERGES.)* O, a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton!

*Sexton.* Which be the malefactors?

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* Mary, that am I, and my partner. 4

*Cowley. (VERGES.)* Nay thats certaine! We haue the exhibition to examine.

*Sexton.* But which are the offenders that are to be examined? Let them come before Maister Constable. 8

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* Yea, Mary, let them come before mee! [TO BOR.] What is your name, friend?

*Bor. Borachio.* 11

*Ke. (DOGB.)* Pray write downe 'Borachio'. [TO CON.] Yours, firra?

*Con.* I am a Gentleman, fir, and my name is *Conrade*.

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\* Q, F put *Borachio* after *Constables*. 1. *Kemp*] Keeper Q, F.  
4. *Kemp (Dogb.)*] Andrew Q, F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Ke. (DOGB.)* Write downe, 'Maister gentleman *Conrade.*'  
¶ Maisters, do you serue God? 16

*Both.* Yea, fir, we hope.

*Kem. (DOGB.)* Write downe, that 'they hope they serue God': and write 'God' first; for God defend but God shoulde goe before such villaines! ¶ Maisters, it is prooued alreadie that you are little better than false knaues; and it will go neere to be thought so shortly. How answer you for your selues?

*Con.* Mary, fir, we say we are none! 23

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* (A maruellous witty fellowe, I assure you! but I will go about with him!) [*To BOR.*] Come you hither, firra! a word in your eare! Sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaues! 27

*Bor.* 'Sir, I say to you,' we are none!

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* VVel, stand aside! ¶ Fore God, they are both in a tale! Haue you writ downe, that 'they are none'?

*Sexton.* Maister Constable! you go not the way to examine: you must call fourth the Watch that are their accusers. 32

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* Yea, mary, thats the estest way. Let the Watch come forth! ¶ Maisters, I charge you in the Princes name, accuse these men! 35

*Watch 1. [points to BOR.]* This man said, fir, that don *Iohn*, the Princes brother, was a villaine!

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* Write downe, 'prince *Iohn* a villaine': why! this is flat periurie! to call a Princes brother 'villaine'! 40

*Borachio.* Maister Constable! . . . .

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* Pray thee, fellowe, peace! I doe not like thy looke, I promise thee.

*Sexton.* [*to Watch*] VVhat heard you him say else? 44

*Watch 2.* Mary, that he had received a thousand Duckats of don *Iohn*, for accusing the Ladie *Hero* wrongfully.

*Kemp. (DOGB.)* Flat Burglarie as euer was committed!

*Conf. (VERGES)* Yea, by masse, that it is. 48

*Sexton.* VVhat else, fellow?

*Watch 1.* And that Counte *Claudio* did meane, vppon his wordes, to disgrace *Hero* before the whole assemblie, and not marrie her. 52

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17-20. *Both . . . villaines*] Q. F om.

48. *by*] Q. by th' F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Kemp.* (DOGB.) O villaine! thou wilt be condemnd into euerlasting redemption for this!

*Sexton.* VVhat elfe?

*Watch. 1.* This is all. 56

*Sexton.* [to BOR. & C.] And this is more, Maisters, then you can deny! Prince *Iohn* is this morning secretlie stolne awaie: *Hero* was in this manner accusde, in this verie manner refusde, and vpon the grieffe of this, sodainlie died. ¶ Maister [60 Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to *Leonatoes*! I will goe before, and shew him their examination. 62

[Exit.

*Constable.* (DOGB.) Come, let them be opinioned!

*Couley.* (VERGES) Let them be in the . . .

[The Watch seize BOR. & CON.

*Con.* Hands off, Coxcombe! 65

*Kemp.* (DOGB.) Gods my life! wheres the Sexton? let him write down the Princes officer 'Coxcombe'! ¶ Come, bind them! [To CON.] Thou naughty varlet!

*Con.* Away! you are an asse! you are an asse! 69

*Kemp.* (DOGB.) Dooft thou not suspect my place? dooft thou not suspect my yeeres? ¶ O that he were here to write me downe an 'asse'! ¶ Bnt, Maisters, remember that I am [72 an 'asse'! Though it bee not written downe, yet forget not that I am an 'asse'! ¶ No, thou villaine! thou art full of pietie, as shal be proude vpon thee by good witnes. I am a wife fellow; and, (which is more,) an Officer; (and [76 which is more,) a Housholder; and (which is more,) as pretty a peece of flesh as anie is in *Messina*, and one that knowes the Law, (goe to!) and a rich fellow enough, (go to!) and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two [80 gownes, and euery thing hanfome about him! ¶ bring him away! ¶ O that I had bin writ downe an 'asse'! 82

[Exeunt.

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61. *Leonatoes*] Q. Leonato F. | Q. F.  
64. *Couley*] Q. Sex. F. | 69. *Con.*] Couley Q. F.  
64. *the . . . Hands*] T. Rochfort- | 78. *is*] Q. F om.  
Smith. the hands of Coxcombe | 82. *Exeunt.*] Exit. Q. F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Actus Quintus.\* Scena Prima.*

*Before LEONATOES House.*

*Enter LEONATO and his brother ANTHONIO.*

*Brother.* If you go on thus, you will kill your selfe : 1  
And tis not wifedome, thus to second grieffe  
Against your selfe.

*Leonato.* I pray thee cease thy counsaile,  
Which falles into mine eares as profitlesse 4  
As water in a fyue. Giue not me counsaile!  
Nor let no comforter delight mine eare,  
But such a one whose wrongs doe sute with mine!  
Bring me a father that so lou'd his child, 8  
Whose ioy of her is ouer-whelmd like mine,  
And bid him speake of patience!  
Measure his woe the length and bredth of mine,  
And let it answer euery straine for straine, 12  
(As thus for thus, and such a grieffe for such,)  
In euery lineament, branch, shape, and forme :  
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard,  
And sorrow wagge<sup>1</sup>, crie 'hem!' when he should grone, 16  
Patch grieffe with prouerbes, make misfortune drunke  
With candle-wafters; bring him yet to me,  
And I of him will gather patience.  
But there is no such man! for, brother, men 20  
Can counsaile, and speake comfort to, that grieffe  
Which they themselues not feele; but tasting it,  
Their counsaile turnes to passion, which before,  
Would giue preceptiall medicine\* to rage, 24  
Fetter strong madnesse in a filken thred,  
Charme ach with ayre, and agony with words:  
No, no! tis all mens office, to speake patience

\* *Actus Quintus*] F.  
6. *comforter*] Q. comfort F.  
7. *doe*] Q. doth F.  
<sup>1</sup> 16. *Sorrow* is the object of the  
verb, *wagge* being transitive here,  
V. i. 1-27.]

like Span. '*menedr*, to wag, to  
weald, to shake off' (Minsheu),  
and Fr. '*mouvoir*, to moue, stirre;  
iog, wag; to remoue' (Cotgrave).  
\*24. *medicine*] F. medicine Q.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

To those that wring vnder the loade of forrow, 28  
But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie,  
To be so morall, when he shall endure  
The like himselfe. Therefore giue me no counsaile!  
My griefes crie lowder then aduertisement! 32  
*Brother.* Therein do men, from children nothing differ.  
*Leonato.* I pray thee, peace! I will be flesh and bloud;  
For there was neuer yet Philosopher,  
That could endure the tooth-ake patiently, 36  
How euer they haue writ the stile of gods,  
And made a push at chance and sufferance.  
*Brother.* Yet bend not all the harme vpon your selfe;  
Make those that do offend you, suffer too! 40  
*Leonato.* There thou speakest reason. Nay, I will do so!  
My soule doth tell me, *Hero* is belied;  
And that shall *Claudio* know; so shall the Prince,  
And all of them that thus dishonour her. 44  
*Brother.* Here comes the Prince and *Claudio* haftily.

*Enter PRINCE and CLAUDIO.*

*Prince.* Good den, good den!  
*Claudio.* Good day to both of you!  
*Leonato.* Heare you, my Lords!  
*Prince.* We haue some haste, *Leonato.*  
*Leonato.* 'Some haste,' my Lord! Well, fare you well, my  
Lord! 48  
Are you so 'hasty' now? wel, all is one.  
*Prince.* Nay, do not quarrel with vs, good old man.  
*Brother.* If he could right himselfe with quarrelling,  
Some of vs would lie low.  
*Claudio.* Who wrongs him? 52  
*Leona.* Mary, thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou!  
Nay, neuer lay thy hand vpon thy sword! [*CL. grasps his*  
I feare thee not! *sword-hilt.*  
*Claudio.* [*letting go his hold*] Mary, beshrew my hand,  
If it should giue your age such cause of feare. 56  
Infaiht, my hand meant nothing to my sword.  
*Leonato.* Tush, tush, man! neuer fleere and iest at me!  
I speake not like a dotard, nor a foole,

*Much ado about Nothing.*

As vnder priuiledge of age to bragge 60  
What I haue done, being yong, or what would doe  
Were I not old. Know, *Claudio*, to thy head,  
Thou haft so wrongd mine innocent child and me,  
That I am forst to lay my reuerence by, 64  
And, with grey haire, and bruiſe of many daies,  
Do challenge thee to triall of a man!  
I ſay, Thou haft belied mine innocent child!  
Thy ſlander hath gone through and through her heart, 68  
And the lies buried with her anceſtors;  
O! in a toomb where neuer ſcandal ſlept,  
Saue this of hers, framde by thy villanie!  
*Claudio*. My 'villany' ?  
*Leonato*. Thine, *Claudio*! thine, I ſay! 72  
*Prince*. You ſay not right, old man.  
*Leonato*. My Lord, my Lord,  
Ile prooue it on his body, if he dare,  
Diſſight his nice fence, and his actiue practiſe,  
His Maie of youth, and bloome of luſtihood! 76  
*Claudio*. Away! I will not haue to doe with you!  
*Leonato*. Canſt thou ſo daſſe me? Thou haft kild my  
child!  
If thou kilſt me, boy, thou ſhalt kill a man!  
*Brother*. He ſhal kill two of vs, and men indeed: 80  
But thats no matter; let him kill one firſt;  
Win me and weare me; let him answer me!  
¶ Come, follow me, boy! Come, ſir boy! come, follow me,  
Sir boy! ile whip you from your foyning fence! 84  
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will!  
*Leonato*. Brother! . . .  
*Brother*. Content your ſelf! God knowes, I loued my Neece,  
And ſhe is dead! ſlanderd to death by villaines, 88  
That dare as well answer a man indeed,  
As I dare take a ſerpent by the tongue:  
Boyes! apes! braggarts! Iackes! milke-fops!  
*Leonato*. Brother *Anthony*! . . .  
*Brother*. Hold you content! What, man! I know them,  
yea, 92  
And what they weigh, euen to the vtmoſt ſcruple:  
Scambling, out-facing, faſhion-monging boies,  
v. i. 60-94.] 60



*Much ado about Nothing.*

That lie, and cogge, and flout, depraue, and flaunder,  
Go antiquely, shew outward hidioufnesse, 96  
And speake off halfe a dozen dang'rous words,  
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst;  
And this is all!

*Leonato.* But, brother *Anthonie!* . . .

*Brother.* Come, tis no matter! 100  
Do not you meddle! let me deale in this!

*Prince.* Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.  
¶ My heart is fory for your daughters death;  
But, on my honour, she was chargde with nothing 104  
But what was true, and very full of prooffe.

*Leonato.* My Lord, my Lord! . . .

*Prince.* I will not heare you!

*Leo.* No? ¶ come, brother! away! I will be heard!

*Bro.* And shal, or some of vs wil smart for it. 108

[*Exeunt ambo.\**]

*Prince.* See, see! heere comes the man we went to seeke!

*Enter BENEDICKE.†*

*Claud.* Now, Signior! what newes?

*Bened.* [*to the PRINCE.*] Good day, my Lord! 111

*Prince.* Welcome, Signior! you are almost come to parte  
almost a fray.

*Claud.* Wee had like to haue had our two noses snapt off  
with two old men without teeth. 115

*Prince.* *Leonato* and his Brother! What thinkst thou?  
Had we fought, I doubt we should haue beene too yong for  
them. 118

*Bened.* In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came  
to seeke you both. 120

*Claud.* We haue beene vp and downe to seeke thee; for  
we are high prooffe melancholie, and would faine haue it  
beaten away? Wilt thou vse thy wit?

*Bened.* It is in my scabberd: shal I drawe it? 124

*Prince.* Doeft thou weare thy wit by thy side?

96. *shew*] and shew Q, F.

97. *off*] Theobald. of Q, F.

100. *Brother*] Ant. F.

\*108. *ambo*] F. amb. Q (both

at l. 107.

†109. *Benedicke*] F (at l. 106).

Ben. Q (at l. 108).

114. *like*] likt Q, F.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Claud.* Neuer any did so, though very many haue been beside their wit. I will bid thee drawe, as wee doe the minfrels: draw, to pleasure vs. 128

*Prince.* As I am an honest man, he lookes pale! ¶ Art thou sicke, or angry?

*Claud.* What! Courage, man! What though care kild a catte? thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care. 132

*Bened.* Sir, I shall meete your wit in the careere, and you charge it against me. I pray you chuse another subiect.

*Claud.* Nay, then, giue him another staffe; this last was broke crosse. 136

*Prince.* By this light, he chaunges more and more: I thinke he be angry indeed.

*Claud.* If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.

*Bened.* [to CLAUD.] Shall I speake a word in your eare? 140

*Claud.* God bleffe me from a challenge!

*Bened.* [Aside to CLAUDIO.] You are a villaine! I leaft not; I will make it good, howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare! Doe mee right, or I will protest your cowardise! You haue kild a sweete Lady; and her death shall fall heauie on you. Let me heare from you! 146

*Claud.* Well, I wil meet you, so I may haue good cheare!

*Prince.* What! a feaft, a feaft?

*Claud.* I'faith, I thanke him: he hath bid me to a calues head & a capon; the which, if I doe not carue most curiously, say my kniffe's naught! ¶ Shall I not find a woodcocke too?

*Bened.* Sir! your wit ambles well; it goes easily. 152

*Prince.* Ile tell thee how *Beatrice* praifd thy witte the other day: I said thou hadst 'a fine witte': 'True,' said she, 'a fine little one.' 'No,' said I, 'a great wit: 'right,' saies she, 'a great grosse one.' 'Nay,' said I, 'a good wit; 'Iust,' [156 said she, 'it hurts no body.' 'Nay,' said I, 'the gentleman is wise: 'Certaine,' said she, 'a wise gentleman.' 'Nay,' said I, 'he hath the tongues: 'That I beleue,' said shee, [159 'for he swore a thing to mee on Munday night, which hee forfwore on Tuesday morning: theres a double tongue; theres\* two tongues.' Thus did shee, an houre together, transfhape

145. *sweete*] Q catch-word: |  
sweete, text. | Q.

154. *said*] Q. saies F.

V. i. 126-162.]

\*161. *theres two*] F. theirs two

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

thy particular vertues; yet at last she concluded with a sigh,  
'thou wast the properst man in *Italy*.' 164

*Claud.* For the which thee wept heartily, and saide 'she  
cared not.'

*Prince.* Yea, that she did! 'but yet, for all that, and if she  
did not hate him deadly, she would loue him dearly:' the  
old mans daughter told vs all. 169

*Claud.* All, all! and moreouer, God sawe him when he  
was hid in the garden.

*Prince.* But when shall we set the 'sausage bulles' hornes on\*  
'the sensible *Benedick's*' head? 173

*Claud.* Yea, and text vnder-neath, 'Here dwells *Benedick*  
the married man?' 175

*Bened.* Fare you wel, Boy! you know my minde. I wil  
leauue you now to your goffep-like humor: you breake iests,  
as braggards do their blades, which (God be thanked!) hurt  
not. ¶ My Lord! for your many courtifies, I thanke you. [179  
I must discontinue your company. Your Brother the Bastard,  
is fled from *Messina*: you haue, among you, kild a sweet and  
innocent Lady. For my Lord *Lacke-beard* there, hee and I  
shal meet; and till then, peace be with him! *[Exit.* 183

*Prince.* He is in earnest!

*Claudio.* In most profound earnest; and, ile warrant you,  
for the loue of *Beatrice*.

*Prince.* And hath challenge thee? 187

*Claudio.* Most sincerely!

*Prince.* What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his  
dublet and hose, and leauues off his wit! 190

*Claudio.* He is then a Giant to an Ape; but then is an Ape  
a Doctour to such a man.

*Prince.* But soft you, let me be! plucke vp my heart, and  
be sad! Did he not say, my Brother was fled? 194

*Enter Constables (DOGBERY & VERGES) and the Watch, with  
CONRADE, and BORACHIO.*

*Const. [Dogb. to CON.]* Come, you sir! if iustice cannot tame  
you, she shall nere weigh more reasons in her ballance. Nay,  
and you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be lookt to! 197

\*172. *on*] F. one Q.

194. *Enter . . .*] At l. 190 in Q, F. (F has 'Constable'.)

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Prince.* How now! two of my brothers men bound!  
*Borachio* one!

*Claudio.* Hearken after their offence, my Lord!

*Prince.* Officers! what offence haue these men done? 201

*Const. [Dogb.]* Mary, sir, they haue committed false report; moreouer, they haue spoken vntruths; secondarily, they are flanders; sixt and lastly, they haue belyed a Lady; thirdly, they haue verified vniust thinges; and, to conclude, they are lying knaues! 206

*Prince.* First, I aske thee, what they haue done? thirdly, I ask thee, whats their offence? sixt and lastly, why they are committed? and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge?

*Claud.* Rightly reasoned, and in his owne diuision; and, by my troth, theres one meaning wel futed. 211

*Prince. [to BOR & CON.]* Who haue you offended, Maisters, that you are thus bound to your answere? This learned Constable is too cunning to be vnderstood: whats your offence?

*Bor.* Sweete Prince! let me goe no farther to mine answere: do you heare me, and let this Counte kill me! I haue [216] deceiued enen your very eyes! what your wisedoms could not discouer, these shallowe fooles haue broght to light; who, in the night, ouerheard me confessing to this man, how *Don Iohn*, your brother, incensed me to flander the Lady [220] *Hero*; howe you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court *Margaret* in *Heroes* garments; [TO CLAUDIO] how you disgracde hir when you should marry hir: ¶ my villany [223] they haue vpon record; which I had rather seale with my death, then repeate ouer to my shame. The Lady is dead, vpon mine and my masters false accusation; and briefely, I desire nothing but the reward of a villaine. 227

*Prince. [to CL.]* Runnes not this speech like yron through your blood?

*Claud.* I haue dronke poison whiles he vtterd it!

*Prince.* But did my Brother fet thee on to this? 230

*Bor.* Yea, and paid me richly for the practise of it!

*Prince.* He is composde and framde of treacherie; And fled he is vpon this villanie.

*Claud.* Sweet *Hero*! now thy image doth appeare 234  
In the rare semblance that I lou'd it first.

*Const. (Dogb. to Watch.)* Come, bring away the plaintiffes!  
V. i. 198-236.] 64

*Much ado about Nothing.*

By this time our Sexton hath reformed Signior *Leonato* of the matter. And, Masters, do not forget to specifie, when time and place shal serue, that I am an 'affe'!

239

*Con. 2. (Verges)* Here, here comes master Signior *Leonato*, and the Sexton too!

*Re-enter LEONATO, his brother ANTHONIO; and Enter the Sexton.*

*Leonato.* Which is the villaine? let me see his eies,  
That when I note another man like him, 243  
I may auoide him! which of these is he?

*Bor.* If you would know your wronger, looke on me!

*Leonato.* Art thou the flauie that with thy breath hast killd  
Mine innocent child?

*Bor.* Yea! euen I alone. 247

*Leo.* No, not so, villaine! thou beliefst thy selfe!  
Here stand a paire of honourable men,  
(A third is fled,) that had a hand in it.

¶ I thanke you, Princes, for my Daughters death: 251  
Record it with your high and worthy deeds!  
Twas brauely done, if you bethinke you of it.

*Clau.* I know not how to pray your pacience;  
Yet I must speake. Choose your reuenge your selfe; 255  
Impose me to what penance your inuention  
Can lay vpon my sinne! yet sinnd I not,  
But in mistaking.

*Prince.* By my soule, nor I!  
And yet, to satisfie this good old man, 259  
I would bend vnder any heauy waight,  
That heele enioyne me to.

*Leonato.* I cannot bid you bid my daughter liue;  
That were impossible: but I pray you both, 263

Possesse the people in *Messina* here,  
How innocent she died; and, [*to CL.*] if your loue  
Can labour aught in sad inuention,  
Hang her an epitaph vpon her toomb, 267

And sing it to her bones; sing it to night!  
To morrow morning, come you to my house;  
And since you could not be my Son in law,  
Be yet my Nephew: my brother hath a daughter, 271

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

Almost the copie of my child thats dead,  
And she alone is heyre to both of vs :  
Giue her the right you should haue giu'n her cofin,  
And so dies my reuenge.

*Claudio.* O noble fir! 275  
Your ouer kindnesse doth wring teares from me!  
I do embrace your offer; and dispose  
For henceforth of poore *Claudio*.

*Leonato.* To morrow then I wil expect your comming; 279  
To night I take my leaue. [*Points to BOR.*] This naughty man  
Shal face to face be brought to *Margaret*,  
Who, I beleene, was packt in al this wrong,  
Hyred to it by your brother.

*Bor.* No! by my soule she was not, 283  
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me,  
But alwayes hath bin iust and vertuous,  
In any thing that I do know by her! 286

*Const. (Dogb. to L.)* Moreouer, fir, (which indeede is not  
vnder white and blacke,) this plaintiffe heere, the offendour,  
did call me 'affe'! I beseech you, let it be remembered in his  
punishment! And also the Watch heard them talke of one  
'Deformed': they say he wears a key in his eare, and a [291  
locke hanging by it, and borows monie in Gods name, the  
which he hath vnde so long, & neuer paid, that now men  
grow hard hearted, and wil lend nothing for Gods sake:  
prae you, examine him vpon that point. 295

*Leonato.* I thanke thee for thy care and honest paines!

*Const. (Dogb.)* Your worship speakes like a most thankful  
and reuerent youth; and I praise God for you.

*Leon.* Theres for thy paines! [*Giues him money.*] 299

*Const. (Dogb.)* God saue the foundation!

*Leon.* Goe! I discharge thee of thy prisoner; and I  
thanke thee. 302

*Const. (Dogb.)* I leaue an arrant knaue with your Worship,  
which I beseech your Worship to correct your selfe, for the  
example of others. God keepe your Worship! I wish your  
Worship well! God restore you to health! I humblie [306  
griue you leaue to depart; and if a merie meeting may be wifht,  
God prohibite it! ¶ Come, neighbour! [*Exeunt*\* **DOG. & VERG.**

\*308. *Exeunt*] F at l. 309.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Leon.* Vntill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell!

*Brot. (Anthonio.)* Farewell, my Lords! we looke for you  
to morrow. 310

*Prince.* We will not faile.

*Claud.* To night ile mourne with *Hero.*  
[*Exeunt PR. & CL.*]

*Leonato.* [to the Watch] Bring you these fellows on!  
¶ Weel talke with *Margaret*, how her acquaintance grew with  
this lewd felow. [Exeunt. 314]

*Actus Quintus. Scena Secunda.*

LEONATOES Garden.

*Enter BENEDICKE and MARGARET.*

*Bened.* Praie thee, sweete Mistris *Margaret*, deferue well at  
my hands, by helping me to the speech of *Beatrice*!

*Mar.* Wil you then write me a Sonnet in praife of my  
beautie? 4

*Bene.* In so high a stile, *Margaret*, that no man liuing shall  
come ouer it; for, in most comely truth, thou deseruest it.

*Mar.* To haue no man come ouer me! why shal I alwaies  
keep below staires? 8

*Bene.* Thy wit is as quicke as the grey-hounds mouth; it  
catches.

*Mar.* And your's, as blunt as the Fencers foiles, which hit,  
but hurt not. 12

*Bene.* A most manly witte, *Margaret*: it will not hurt a  
woman: and so, I pray thee, call *Beatrice*! I giue thee the  
bucklers.

*Marg.* Giue vs the fwordes; wee haue bucklers of our  
owne. 17

*Bene.* If you vse them, *Margaret*, you must putte in the  
pikes with a vice; and they are daungerous weapons for  
maides. 20

*Mar.* Well, I will call *Beatrice* to you, who I thinke hath  
legges. [Exit MARGARITE.]

*Bene.* And therefore wil come. [Sings. 23

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*The God of loue  
That fits about* 25  
*And knowes mee, and knowes me,  
How pittifull I deserue . . .* 27

I meane in finging; but in louing, *Leander* the good swimmer, *Troilus* the first imploier of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet [30 runne smoothly in the euen rode of a blancke verse, why, they were neuer so truly turnd ouer and ouer as my poore selfe, in-loue! Mary, I cannot shew it in rime. I haue tried: I can finde out no rime to 'Ladie' but 'babie,' (an innocent [34 rime!) for 'sorne,' 'horne,' (a hard rime!) for 'schoole' 'foole,' (a babling rime!) very ominous endings. No! I was not borne vnder a riming Plannet, nor I cannot wooe in festiuall termes. 38

*Enter BEATRICE.*

Sweete *Beatrice!* wouldst thou come when I cald thee?

*Beat.* Yea, Signior, and depart when you bid me.

*Bene.* O, stay but till then! 41

*Beat.* 'Then,' is spoken: fare you wel now! and yet, ere I goe, let me goe with that I came; which is, with knowing what hath past betweene you and *Claudio.* 44

*Bene.* Onely foule words: and therevpon I will kisse thee. [Tries to.

*Beat.* [*draws back*] 'Foule words' is but foule wind; and foule wind is but foule breath; and foule breath is noifome; therefore I wil depart vnkift. 48

*Bene.* Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sence, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tel thee plainly, *Claudio* vndergoes my challenge; and either I must shortly heare from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And (I pray thee) now tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fal in loue with me? 54

*Beat.* For them all together; which maintaine so politique a state of euil, that they will not admitte any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer loue for me? 58

37. nor] Q. for F. 38-39. Enter . . .] F. Q after l. 39.

43. came] Q. F. came for Pope.



*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Bene.* 'Suffer loue'! a good epithite! I do 'suffer loue' indeed! for I loue thee against my will.

*Beat.* In spight of your heart, I thinke. Alas, poore heart! If you spight it for my sake, I will spight it for yours; for I wil neuer loue that which my friend hates. 63

*Bene.* Thou and I are too wise to wooe peaceably.

*Beat.* It appeares not in this confession: theres not one wife man among twentie that will praise himselfe. 66

*Bene.* An old, an old instance, *Beatrice*, that liu'd in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect, in this age, his owne Toomb ere he dies, he shall liue no longer in monument, then the Bell rings, and the Widow weepes. 70

*Beat.* And how long is that, thinke you?

*Bene.* Question! why, an hower in clamour, and a quarter in rhowme; therefore is it most expedient for the wife, (if *Don Worme*, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary,) to be the trumpet of his owne vertues, as I am to my self. So much for praising my selfe, who, I my selfe will beare witnes, is praise worthie. And now tell me, how doth your cofin? 78

*Beat.* Verie ill.

*Bene.* And how do you? [*Puts his arm round her.*]

*Beat.* Verie ill too.

*Bene.* Serue God, loue me, and mend! [*Kisses her.* 82  
There wil I leaue you too, for here comes one in hafte.

*Enter VRSULA.*

*Vrsula.* Madam, you must come to your Vncle! Yonders old coile at home! it is prooued my Lady *Hero* hath bin falsely accusde, the Prince and *Claudio* mightily abusde, and *Don Iohn* is the author of all, who is fled and gone! will you come presently? 88

*Beat.* Will you go heare this newes, Signior?

*Bene.* I wil liue in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eies: and moreouer, I wil go with thee to thy vnclcs.

[*Exeunt.\**]

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70. *Bell rings*] Q. Bels ring F. 83-4. *Enter . . .*] Q. F at l. 81.

\*91. *Exeunt*] F. Exit Q.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Actus Quintus. Scena Tertia.*

*A Church in Messina, with HERO'S Monument & Musicians.*

*Enter CLAUDIO, PRINCE, and three or foure with Tapers.*

*Claudio.* Is this the monument of *Leonato* ?

*A Lord.* It is, my Lord.

**CLAUDIO**<sup>1</sup> *reads his Epitaph on HERO from a Paper.*

*Done to death by slanderous<sup>2</sup> tongues,* 3

*Was the Hero that heere lies :*

*Death, in guerdon of her wronges,*

*Giues her fame which neuer dies :*

*So the life that dyed with shame,*

*Liues in death with glorious fame.* 8

¶ Hang thou there vpon the toomb,

Praising hir when I am dombe!\*

¶ Now, Mufick, found, & fing your solemne hymne! 11

*Song. Pardon, Goddesse of the Night,*

*Those that slew thy virgin knight !*

*For the which, with songs of woe,*

*Round about her tombe they goe.* 15

¶ *Midnight ! assist our mone !*

*Help vs to sigh & grone,*

*Heauily, heauily !* 18

¶ *Graues ! yawne and yeeld your dead,*

*Till death be vttered,*

*Heauenly, heauenly ! †* 21

*Claudio.* Now, vnto thy bones, good night !

Yeerely will I do this right. 23

*Prince.* Good morrow, Maisters ! Put your Torches out !

The wolues haue preied ; and looke, the gentle day

Before the wheelles of *Phœbus*, round about

<sup>1</sup> Q, F, put *Claudio* to line 11.

<sup>2</sup> for *n* Q has a turnd *n*.

\*10. *dombe*] F. dead Q.

†21. *Heauenly* . . ] F. Heauily,  
heauily Q.

22. *Claudio*] Lo. Q, F.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

Dapples the drowfie East with spots of grey : 27  
Thanks to you al, and leaue vs : Fare you well!  
*Claudio.* Good morrow, Masters! each, his feuerall way.  
[*Exeunt Attendants.*  
*Prince.* Come, let vs hence, and put on other weedes; 30  
And then to *Leonatoes* we will goe!  
*Claudio.* And *Hymen* now with luckier issue speed's,  
Then this for whom we rendred vp this woe! [*Exeunt.* 33

*Actus Quintus. Scena Quarta.*

*A Hall in LEONATOES House.*

*Enter* LEONATO, BENEDICK, MARGARET, VRSULA, *old man*  
(ANTHONIO), Frier FRANCIS, HERO, BEATRICE.

*Frier.* Did I not tell you shee was innocent? 1

*Leo.* So are the Prince and *Claudio*, who accusd her,  
Vpon the errour that you heard debated:  
But *Margaret* was in some fault for this, 4  
Although against her will, as it appears,  
In the true course of all the questión.

*Old Anth.* Wel! I am glad that all things forts so well.

*Bened.* And so am I, being else by faith enforst 8  
To call young *Claudio* to a reckoning for it.

*Leo.* Well, daughter, ¶ and you gentlewomen all,  
Withdraw into a chamber by your selues;  
And when I fend for you, come hither masked! 12  
[*Exeunt Ladies.*

¶ The Prince and *Claudio* promise by this howre  
To visite me. ¶ You know your office, Brother!  
You must be father to your brothers daughter,  
And giue her to young *Claudio*.<sup>1</sup> 16

*Old Anth.* Which I will doe with cónfirmd countenance.

*Bened.* Frier! I must intreate your paines, I thinke.

*Frier.* To doe what, Signior?

*Bened.* To bind me, or vndo me: one of them. 20

---

32. *speed's*] Theobald (Thirlby | this to l. 16.  
conj.). speeds Q, F. | <sup>1</sup> But *Leo.* does it: see l. 54.  
12. *Exeunt Ladies.*] Q and F put |

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

¶ Signior *Leonato*! truth it is, good Signior,  
Your Niece regards me with an eye of fauour.  
*Leo.* That eye, my daughter lent her: tis most true.  
*Bened.* And I do with an eye of loue requite her. 24  
*Leo.* The fight whereof, I thinke you had from me,  
From *Claudio* and the Prince: but whats your will?  
*Bened.* Your anfwere, fir, is enigmaticall;  
But, for my wil,—my will is, your good will 28  
May stand with ours, this day to be conioynd  
In the state of honorable marriage;  
¶ In which (good Frier,) I shal desire your help.  
*Leo.* My heart is with your liking.  
*Frier.* And my helpe. 32  
Heere comes the Prince and *Claudio*.

*Enter PRINCE, and CLAUDIO, and two or three other Lords.*

*Prince.* Good morrow to this faire assembly!  
*Leo.* Good morrow, Prince! ¶ Good morrow, *Claudio*!  
We heere attend you. Are you yet determined, 36  
To day to marry with my brothers daughter?  
*Claud.* Ile hold my mind, were she an *Ethiophe*.  
*Leo.* Call her forth, Brother! heres the Frier ready.  
[*Exit ANTHONIO.*  
*Prince.* Good morrow, *Benedicke*! why, whats the matter,  
That you haue such a Februarie face,  
So full of froft, of florme, and clowdineffe?  
*Claud.* I thinke he thinkes vpon the ‘fauage bull.’  
Tush, feare not, man! wee le tip thy hornes with gold, 44  
And all *Europa* shall reioyce at thee,  
As once *Europa* did at lustie *Ioue*,\*  
When he would play the noble beaft in loue. 47  
*Bene.* Bull *Ioue*, fir, had an amiable lowe,  
And some such strange Bull leapt your fathers Cowe, 49  
And got a Calfe in that same noble feate,  
Much like to you, for you haue iust his bleate. 51  
*Claud.* For this I owe you: here comes other recknings.

---

33. Heere... *Claudio*] Q. F om. | 40. *Prince*... *Benedicke*] P. . . .  
33-4. and . . . other] Q. with | Bened. Q. Prin. . . . Benedike F.  
attendants F. | \*46. *Ioue*] F. ? loue Q.

*Much ado about Nothing.*

*Re-enter brother ANTHONIO, with HERO, BEATRICE, MARGARET, VRSULA, maskt.*

¶ Which is the Lady I must seize upon?

*Leo.* This fame is she; and I do give you her.

*Claud.* Why, then shees mine. ¶ Sweet, let me see your face!

*Leon.* No! that you shall not, till you take her hand 56  
Before this Frier, and sweare to marry hir.

*Claud.* Give me your hand! Before this holy Frier,  
I am your husband, if you like of me.

*Hero.* And when I liu'd, I was your other wife: [*Unmasks.*]  
And when you loued, you were my other husband. 61

*Claud.* Another *Hero!*

*Hero.* Nothing certainer!

One *Hero* died defilde, but I do liue;  
And surely as I liue, I am a maide! 64

*Prince.* The former *Hero!* *Hero* that is dead!

*Leon.* She died, my Lord, but whiles her flander liu'd.

*Frier.* All this amazement can I qualifie,  
When, after that the holy rites are ended, 58  
He tell you largely of faire *Heroes* death.

Meane time, let wonder seeme familiar,  
And to the chappell let vs presently! 71

*Ben.* Soft and faire, Frier! [*To Ladies*] Which is *Beatrice?*  
*Beat.* [*unmasks*] I answer to that name! What is your  
will?

*Bene.* Do not you loue me?

*Beat.* Why, no! no more then reason.

*Bene.* Why, then your Vncle, and the Prince, and *Claudio*,  
Haue beene deceiued: they swore you did! 76

*Beat.* Do not you loue me?

*Bene.* Troth no! 'no more then reason.'

*Beat.* Why, then my Cousin, *Margaret*, and *Vrsula*,  
Are much deceiu'd; for they did sweare you did!

*Bene.* They swore that you were almost sicke for me! 80

*Beat.* They swore that you were welnigh dead for me!

*Bene.* Tis no such matter! Then you do not loue me?

54. *Leo.*] Q. F. It was to be | 80, 81. *that*] Q.  
Antonio: see l. 15-17, p. 71. | 82. *suck*] Q.  
63. *defilde*] Q.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

*Beat.* No, truly! but in friendly recompence.

*Leon.* Come, Cofin! I am fure you loue the gentleman. 84

*Clau.* And ile be fworne vpon't, that he loues her;  
For heres a paper written in his hand,  
A halting fonnet of his owne pure braine,  
Fashioned to *Beatrice*.

*Hero.* And heres another, 88  
Writ in my Cofins hand, stolne from her pocket,  
Containing her affection vnto *Benedicke*. 90

*Bene.* A miracle! heres our owne hands againft our hearts.  
Come! I will haue thee! but by this light, I take thee for pittie.

*Beat.* I would not denie you; but, by this good day, I yeeld  
vpon great perfwafion; and partly to faue your life, for I was  
told, you were in a confumption. 95

*Bene.* Peace! I will ftop your mouth. [*Kisses her.*]

*Prince.* How doft thou, '*Benedicke*, the married man?'

*Bene.* Ile tel thee what, Prince: a Colledge of Witte-  
crackers cannot flout me out of my humour! Doft thou think  
I care for a Satyre or au Epigramme? No! if a man will [100  
be beaten with braines, a fhall weare nothing hanfome about  
him. In briefe, fince I doe purpofe to marrie, I will think  
nothing to anie purpofe that the world can faie againft it; and  
therefore, neuer flout at me for what I haue faid againft it; [104  
for man is a giddie thing, and this is my conclufion [*draws*  
**BEAT. to him**]. ¶ For thy part, *Claudio*, I did thinke to haue  
beaten thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman,  
liue vnbruisde, and loue my Coufen! [*Points to HERO.* 108

*Clau.* I had wel hopte thou wouldft haue denied *Beatrice*,  
that I might haue cudgelld thee out of thy fingle life, to make  
thee a double dealer; which, out of queftion thou wilt be, if  
my Cofin [*points to BEAT.*] do not looke exceeding narrowly  
to thee. 113

*Bene.* Come, come! we are friends. Lets haue a dance  
ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts, and  
our wines heeles!

*Leon.* Weele haue dancing afterward. 117

*Bene.* Firft, of my worde! ¶ Therefore plaie, Muficke!

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96. *Bene.*] *Leon.* Q. 104. *what*] Q. F om.

105. *draws . . . him*] P. A. Daniel conj.

*Much adoe about Nothing.*

¶ Prince, thou art fad! Get thee a wife, get thee a wife!  
there is no staffe more reuerent then one tipt with horne. 120

*Enter Messenger.*

*Mess.* My Lord! your brother *John* is tane in flight,  
And brought with arméd men backe to *Messina*.

*Bene.* Thinke not on him till to morrow! ile deuise thee  
braue punishments for him. ¶ Strike vp, Pipers! 124  
[*Dance. Exeunt.*

*FINIS.*





## NOTES.

- I. i. 224. 'In time the savage bull doth beare the yoke.' Benedick quotes somewhat inaccurately from the opening dialogue of Act II in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* between Lorenzo and Balthasar, where the line reads, 'In time the savage bull sustaines the yoke.' This portion of the much-ridiculed play was extremely popular. Sir Abraham Ninny in *Woman is a Weathercock* tries to pass off a couplet from the same dialogue as original, but is immediately detected.
- I. i. 269. 'Story.' A commentator has objected to this word as being out of place, and 'string' has been suggested. This emendation may be unhesitatingly rejected, the original reading being quite satisfactory and very apposite in connection with 'a book of wordes' in line 265.
- II. iii. 36-43. These lines have been designated by Warburton as 'impious nonsense.' He considered them as an interpolation by the actors, and not from the hand of Shakespeare. The passage may be compared with the speech of the porter in *Macbeth*; the 'impiety' is quite insufficient ground for rejecting them.
- II. iii. 115. *The Hundred Mery Tales* was a popular jest-book in the reign of Elizabeth. To modern readers the coarseness and crudity of most of the tales are more apparent than the humour.
- II. iii. 237-8. 'A tooth-picker from the furthest inch of Asia,' etc. Perhaps a hit at the promiscuous articles which travellers were in the habit of bringing back as evidence that they had duly accomplished their voyage. Thus Puntarvolo in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of His Humour* was required to produce a Turk's mustachio, a Grecian hare's lip, and the tail of a Thracian rat.
- III. i. 31. 'Her hair shall be of what colour it please God.' A very prominent foible of the ladies of Shakespeare's time was the practice of dyeing their hair, preferably to a sandy colour, as a piece of the sincerest form of flattery to Queen Elizabeth.
- III. iii. 32. 'A Germaine from,' etc. The fantastical and assorted fashions of Englishmen are again ridiculed in the *Merchant of Venice*, Act I, sc. 2; this was a theme frequently found in dramatic and satirical writers. An excellent example occurs in Hall's *Virgidemiarum*, Book III, 1—
- 'A French head joined to neck Italian;  
Thy thighs from Germany, and breast from Spain;  
An Englishman in none, a fool in all;  
Many in one, and one in several.'

See also *Andrew Boorde* (Early English Text Society), p. 116, and Harrison's *Description of England*, p. 167-8.

## Notes.

- III. iv. 1. Dogbery. According to Auhrey this character was taken from real life, the original being a constable of Grendon in Buckinghamshire, a village which Shakespeare passed through on his journeys between London and Stratford.
- III. iv. 34 *et seq.* The watch formed a common butt for the humorous writers of the time. 'They commonly eat onions to keep them in sleeping, which they account a medicine against cold' (Dekker's *Gull's Hornbook*, chap. viii). In Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Coxcomb*, referring to these worthy gentry, says, 'When they take a thief I'll take Ostend again. The whoresons drink opium in their ale, and then they sleep like tops; as for their bills, they only serve to reach down bacon and hang rashers on.'
- IV. i. 49. 'For the letter that begins them all, H.' The word 'ache' varied in pronunciation, the noun hovering between 'ake' and 'aitch,' and the verb between 'ake' and 'atch.' Hunter uses this line to support a theory that the character of Benedick is supposed to represent William Herbert!
- IV. i. 50. 'An you be not turned Turk.' To turn Turk means to undergo a complete change. Thus in the *City Gallant*, 'This it is to turn Turk: from a most absolute, compleat gentleman to a most absurd, ridiculous, and fond lover.'
- IV. i. 65. *Carduus Benedictus* was an esteemed medicine of the time. In the *Haven of Health* we are told, '*Carduus Benedictus* or blessed thistle . . . strengtheneth all the principal parts of the body . . . comfirteth the stomach, procureth appetite, hath a special virtue against poison and preserveth from the pestilence, and is excellent good against any kind of fever.'
- IV. iii. 140. 'Foul-tainted.' Collier's substitution of 'soul-tainted' for this epithet is justly dubbed by Dyce to be a 'piece of mere impertinence.'
- V. ii. 30. 'Carpet-mongers.' This word has much the same significance as carpet-knights, viz. those who were skilled in the effeminate arts of a courtier as opposed to those of military valour. A good description of a carpet-knight occurs in *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, by Beaumont and Fletcher—

'No Carpet Knight  
That spent his youth in groves, or pleasant bowers;  
Or stretching on a Couch his lazy limbes,  
Sung to his Lute such soft and melting notes,  
As *Ovid*, nor *Anacreon* ever knew,  
Could work on them.' (I. i.)

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